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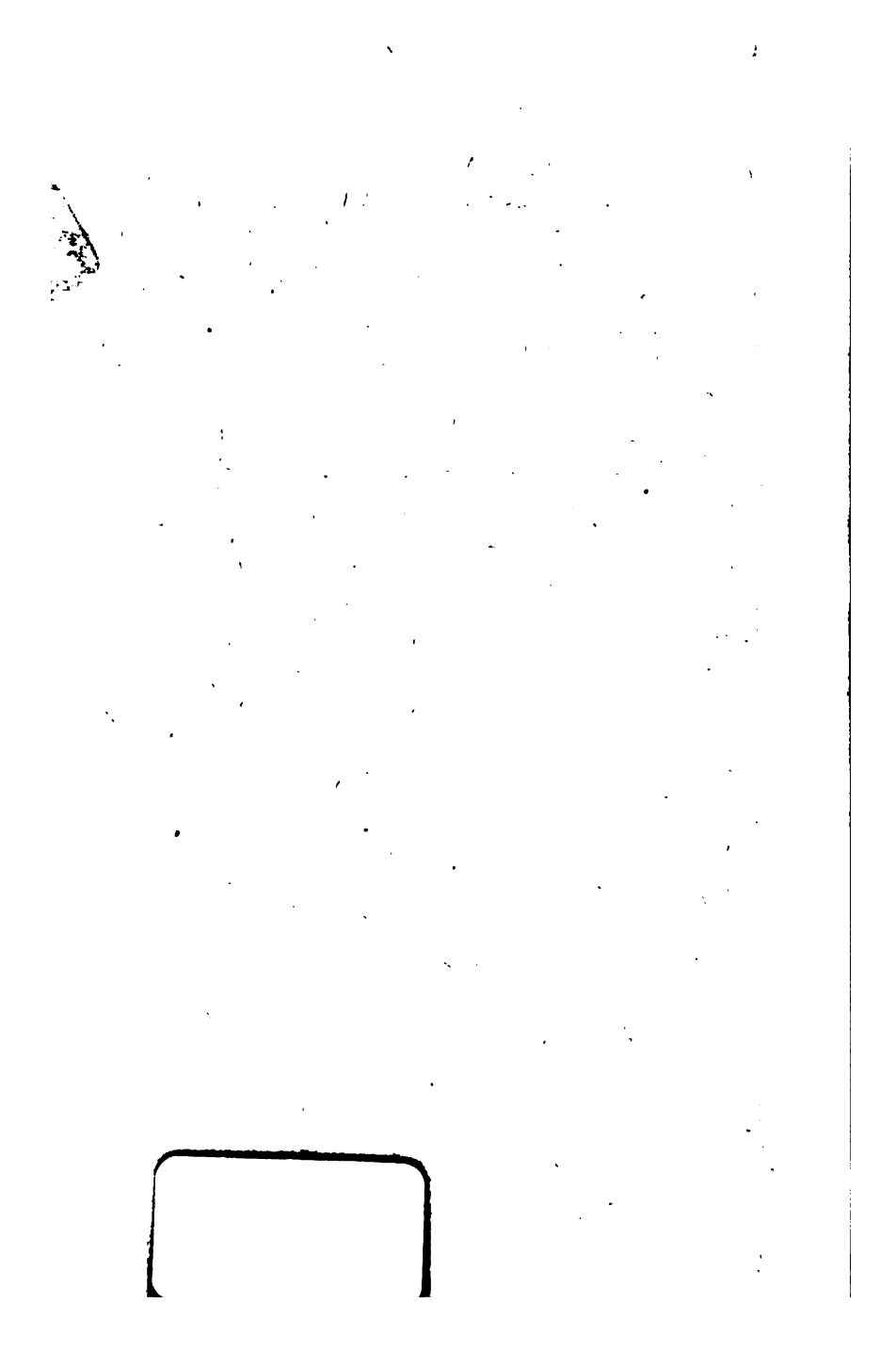
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HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM

THE EARLIEST TIMES

TO

THE DEATH OF VISCOUNT PALMERSTON, 1865.



BY

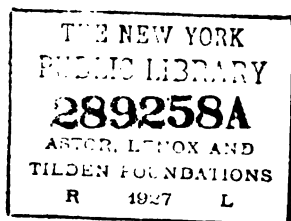
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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

IT may be thought a sufficient apology for offering to the world the following brief sketch of the history of England, that, since the most recent works on the same scale have been compiled, many very important volumes have been published, throwing so much light upon the most modern period of that history, that an author that now endeavours to give an account of the times to which those works relate has great advantages over earlier writers. I allude particularly to the works of Guizot, Macaulay, Lord Mahon, and Alison, and also to the numerous and valuable publications containing the letters, despatches, &c., of the Grenvilles, Lord Rockingham, Lord Malmesbury, Fox, Lord Castlereagh, Lord Nelson, and the Duke of Wellington; to the elaborate and eloquent histories of our Indian campaigns by different authors; to Lord Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*; and to many other volumes of letters, journals, and biographies, greatly facilitating our acquaintance with the periods to which they respectively relate, by presenting us with information in an easily accessible form, which previously could only be attained with exceeding difficulty, and then only in a scanty degree.

For a book of such moderate pretensions and confined dimensions as the present, it will not be expected that the author has had recourse to unpublished documents ; but he is not aware of having omitted to consult any important printed work, referring to his subject, in either English or French literature, though he has not thought it necessary to encumber his page or to distract the attention of the reader by references to authorities, which, from the period and the subjects treated of, may in general be easily conjectured.

The Table of Contents is arranged in such a manner, that it may serve as a Chronological Table of the general history of the kingdom up to the present time.





PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

SINCE the original publication of this volume a great number of works have appeared throwing additional and often an entirely new light on different periods of the history of England: Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest; Pearson's History of England in the Middle Ages; many of the Records published under the authority of the Master of the Rolls, and edited with care and learning by Mr. Stubbs, Mr. Gardner, and others; Burton's History of Scotland, Froude's History of the greater part of the 16th century; Clifford's Life of Edward I.; Longman's Life of Edward III.; Dean Hook's Lives of the Archbishops; Mr. Forster's Life of sir John Eliot, and other works on different passages in the great Rebellion; and Motley's account of the wars in the Netherlands, unfolding, as it does, so many of the details of Philip's designs against England, may be mentioned as the most important. These have all been carefully examined, and this volume has been compared with them, and thoroughly revised;

many additions being made, and many passages relating to events of moment being re-written, in order to give the student, as far as possible, the advantage of the labours of the above-mentioned writers. Two chapters have also been added at the end, giving an account of the Indian Mutiny, the war in China, and bringing down the work to the death of Lord Palmerston.





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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

CIVILIZATION and literature were, in ancient times, so entirely confined to the south-eastern portion of Europe, and to the parts of Asia bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, from which the Europeans originally derived them, that it is not surprising that the further a country lies from those regions, the slighter should be the knowledge attainable of its early history. And this is eminently the case with our own island, known by no distinctive name to the Greeks, and the very last country invaded by the all-conquering ambition of the Romans. The monks, indeed, who are our earliest chroniclers, and who caught from the classic historians (it was all that they did learn from them) the desire to dignify their theme by tracing the history of their country back to a remote antiquity, give a minute account of Brutus, the great-grandson of Æneas, coming under the guidance of Diana, to the island then known as Albion, and inhabited only by a few giants, calling it Britain after his own name, and founding London at the time when Eli was judge in Judea. York arose as the metropolis of the northern part of the kingdom while Solomon was building the temple, and Lear was furnishing a subject for the most sublime of Shakespeare's tragedies, at the same time that the wolf on the banks of the Tiber was nursing the future founders of the city, from which, in after ages, his descendants were to receive their conquerors and their missionaries. But, not to dwell on

childish fables such as these, we must admit, that beyond the fact of the existence of our country and of its containing tin mines, which were worked by the Phœnicians, probably at an era not much a.c. later than that of Solomon, nothing whatever was known of it ⁵⁴ till Cæsar, after subduing Gaul, sailed across to the white cliffs, visible from the opposite shore, and extended the Roman dominion by one more conquest, which soon became popular among the Roman ladies, as furnishing them a larger supply of pearls than they could then obtain from the deeper waters of the Eastern Ocean; and with the epicures, on account of the exquisite oysters from the Kentish Coast, which speedily became an established article of luxury at patrician tables. We need not dwell on the gallant but unsuccessful resistance of Boadicea and Caractacus; or the skill with which Agricola gradually brought the whole island under the Roman yoke, though the conquerors soon retired from the northern districts, building a wall, traces of which are to be seen to this day, to check the irruptions of the Scots, who even at that early period had begun to manifest their aptitude and inclination for border warfare; and before the end of the fourth century, at the beginning of which the armies in Britain had given an emperor to the world in the person of the great Constantine, they finally quitted the island altogether.

The Britons were not more tranquil, or more happy, for their deliverance from their masters, whom they had learnt rather to look upon as their defenders. The Picts and Scots, whose names* denote the unsettled and piratical habits of their lives, and one of which has given a lasting title to the district which they inhabited, disregarded the barrier opposed to them by the wall of Severus, overran the frontier, and, tempted by a more genial climate, spread themselves with rapid progress over the whole island. The Britons solicited the Romans to return to their protection, but Ætius, the Roman emperor, was too much occupied in endeavouring to defend Italy itself from Attila, to be able to spare any attention to a distant and now abandoned province. Repulsed by the Romans, they implored the aid of the Saxons, the most powerful and warlike of the German tribes. The Saxons, a term which in that age described the inhabitants of Jutland, and the districts around, especially those on the northern side of the mouth of the Elbe, were willing enough to come to their assistance, and probably would not have waited long for an invitation, for they were a poor and ambitious race, and Britain had already a reputation for riches and fertility, with which they had become acquainted in the descents that they had made, even in the time of the Romans, upon the southern and eastern

* *Pictish* meant a plunderer; *Scots*, a wanderer; but this etymology is disputed, and is very doubtful.

coasts. They now embraced with eagerness so fair a pretext for crossing the sea in more formidable numbers, and gave the Picts and Scots a bloody overthrow in Lincolnshire, which for a time drove them back to their own territories. But the fable of the horse, the stag, and the man, was realized by the result of their victory; the Britons were indeed delivered from their former enemies, but it was only to fall under the yoke of far more severe and more permanent masters.

A.D.
449. Hengist and Horsa, two brothers who led the first Saxon force which accepted the invitation, speedily overran the whole island. The chroniclers differ in their account of the details of the conquest, nor can we now decide whether Vortigern, the British king, was seduced to coalesce with the invaders by his love for Hengist's daughter, Rowena; or whether he was treacherously slain, with the most powerful of his nobles, in a banquet at Stonehenge, which, having been erected by the Druids, the ancient priests of the island, looked then, as now, in massive grandeur over the extensive wilds of Salisbury Plain.* It is certain that after his victory Hengist sent to Saxony for additional bodies of his countrymen; and that other bands of invaders from the neighbouring districts of Germany, whose ambition and covetousness were excited by the report of his easy conquest, descended on different parts of the British coast; and, though so many successive invasions stimulated the natives to some resistance, in no very great length of time completed the subjection of the whole island except Wales and Cornwall, and parcelled it out into the seven kingdoms of Wessex, Sussex, and Essex, (the territories of the West, South, and East Saxons,) Kent, Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumberland, which were known for near three hundred years as the Saxon Heptarchy.†

The petty states into which the island was now divided soon forgot their common origin in the jealousies to which their proximity and the absence of other enemies gave rise. And the whole country was desolated with incessant wars of so little importance or interest, that Milton pronounced that they no more deserved a particular narrative than the skirmishes of kites and crows; till, at the beginning of the ninth century, Egbert, king of Wessex, whose dominions included Devonshire, Wiltshire, Hampshire, and Berkshire, subdued the kingdoms of Kent and Essex, and incorporated them with his own dominions, and brought the others into such a state of subjection, that he has often been called, though incorrectly, the founder of the English monarchy.

But during the continuance of the Heptarchy one event of a different character had taken place, destined to exert a more power-

* But some Modern Archeologists fix the erection at a far later date.

† Sharon Turner says it ought rather to be called the Octarchy, as Northumberland consisted of the two kingdoms Deira and Bernicia.

ful and lasting influence over the nation than the might of any barbarian warrior, or the wisdom of any human statesman. The religion of Jesus Christ had, some generations previously, been introduced into Gaul, not indeed in the pure form which the learning of zealous theologians and the simplicity of earnest worshippers have combined to establish among ourselves at the present day; not untainted with relics of heathen philosophy, nor wholly purified from the fiercer stain of heathen superstition; but still the name of Christ was recognized throughout Gaul, as that of the Saviour of mankind; and the leading doctrines of the Christian faith had expelled the fierce fanaticism of the Druids. Some knowledge of it had also reached Britain. Morgan or Pelagius, the author of the heresy still branded under his name in our articles, was born among the mountains of Wales, and preachers from Gaul had crossed the Channel to combat the spread of his opinions among his countrymen. There was even a settled form of Church government among the Welsh; they had convents and monasteries, bishops, and an archbishop, wholly independent of the see of Rome; but as their doctrines were in some respects heretical, and their practices, in many points, at variance with those of the Roman Church, the Pope scarcely admitted their right to the name of Christians at all. In Scotland, too, Columba, a missionary from Ireland (where, as in Wales, there already existed an independent Christian Church), had converted many of the Picts and Scots, and on the small and rocky island of Iona had built a school and a convent, the ruins of which still preserve his memory as the first introducer of Christianity into those regions.*

It was no longer to be confined to the outskirts of the island. Ethelbert, king of Kent, in the latter portion of the sixth century, married Bertha, daughter of Caribert, king of Paris, and a descendant of Clovis, the first Christian monarch of Gaul. It had been stipulated that she should be allowed the free exercise of her religion, and she brought with her a bishop as her chaplain. She was eager to lead her husband and his subjects to embrace the religion on which her own hopes were founded, and her gentle though firm character soon obtained for her such influence, not only over him, but over all who came in contact with her, that Gregory the Great, who was pope at the time, conceived hopes of realizing a project which he had entertained, even before his elevation to that dignity, of achieving the conversion of the whole nation. Many years before he had seen some British captives on sale in the slave-market at Rome, and being told, on inquiry, that they were Angles, replied, in reference to their fair skins and blooming complexions, that they

* Mr. Stubbs (memorials of Richard I., vol. II., p. xiii.) attributes the conversion of England also in part to monks of the Irish School.

would be angels if they were only Christians. He would at once have set out himself on a mission which he was far from imagining to be free from danger, had not his countrymen been more impressed with the perils to be encountered than he was himself; and had not they, looking forward with confidence to his promotion in his own land, compelled him to remain at home and await it. The papal dignity prevented him from resuming the idea of undertaking the enterprise in person, but he selected a Benedictine monk named Augustine, and sent him with a chosen body of subordinate assistants, to bring a nation so highly favoured in all personal endowments into the true fold. Ethelbert did not at once profess himself a disciple of the preacher. At first he would not even trust himself under the same roof with him, but heard him discourse in the open air, that he might be less under the power of his witchcraft, if that should prove to be the art on which he really relied; but the assent which Ethelbert withheld from his arguments was yielded to the miracles by which they seemed to be confirmed; and at last he consented to be baptized. Many of his subjects, as was natural, followed the king's example, and he would not have scrupled to compel the obedience of the rest by force, had not Augustine, wiser than his successors, taught him that their belief, to be acceptable, must be voluntary, and that violence and cruelty were wholly inconsistent with the religion of the Prince of Peace.

The example of so important a state, and the matrimonial connexions which the different kings of the Heptarchy formed with each other, gradually led to the introduction of Christianity into all the separate kingdoms; and long before the time of Egbert, paganism had been wholly driven from the land.

^{A.D.}
^{832.} Egbert was not allowed to reap the peaceful enjoyment of his now ample dominions. Even before his birth, pirates from the Baltic Sea, called Danes in Britain, and Normans, or inhabitants of the northern regions, in Gaul, had made descents on the coast on each side of the Channel; but in Britain they had met with a severe repulse, and had been driven back to their own country with considerable slaughter. Soon after his accession they returned in more formidable numbers; one year they pillaged the isle of Sheppey; another year they landed in Devonshire, where the principal esplanade at Teignmouth still by its name of "the Den," preserves the memory of their inroads. While Egbert lived they were constantly defeated and expelled; but under his less warlike son, Ethelwolf, they met with greater success, and, though still gallantly resisted for a time, they at last effected a permanent settlement in the isles of Thanet and Sheppey, from which as their head-quarters they extended their devastation over the southern districts of the kingdom. They were not in reality altogether aliens

from the Saxon race, and the language of each nation, though not identical, was understood by the other; but the conversion of the Saxons in Britain to Christianity had obliterated from the minds of the Danes all recollection of their common descent. Their connexion with the German Saxons they looked upon as a far more binding tie; and the atrocities by which Charlemagne had sought to compel those tribes to embrace Christianity, had made the Danes look upon all Christians as enemies, deserving similar severities at their hands.

Ethelwolf was a weak and superstitious bigot, contented in such a time of danger to surrender the government of those parts of the kingdom which were most exposed to the now incessant attacks of the enemy, to his eldest son, Athelstan, while he made pilgrimages to Italy, and sought to gain the favour of heaven by profuse grants to the Church in Rome and to the pope himself.

One important and salutary measure was at the same time extorted from him for the Church in England. The kingdom had been divided into parishes by Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, nearly two centuries before, but, as yet, the priests of those parishes had no endowment. There might be a difficulty in proving logically that the divine appropriation of the tithe of all the land as holy unto the Lord, in the time of Moses, was intended to endure through all ages, and in every country; but there could be no question that it was not only politically important, but also strictly just and equitable that they who devoted their lives to the ministration of the offices of the Church should be secured a decent and adequate provision for their maintenance. And though that provision has, in our own time, been greatly curtailed, owing to the indifference of some and the cupidity of others, it cannot well be argued as a matter of theory, and it certainly has not been found to be the fact, that a tenth of the produce of the land formed too ample a revenue for those whose devotion to the highest interests of their fellow-creatures had led them to forsake more lucrative professions. Ethelwolf, after his return from Rome, summoned the states of the whole kingdom, and with the consent of this assembly conferred on the Church of England a perpetual donation of the tithes of the land; but so completely did the weakness of his intellect prevent him from doing even a reasonable thing in a reasonable manner, and so infectious is superstition among an ignorant people, however resolute and high-spirited in other respects, that the revenues thus bestowed upon the Church were exempted from bearing any share in the burdens imposed on every other body for the defence of the kingdom from the national enemy, though the principal object of their enmity was that very Church thus excused from contributing to its own defence.

Athelstan died before his father, who then shared his kingdom with Ethelbald, his second son ; and, dying soon after, left it to Ethelbald and his brother Ethelbert, who, after a short reign, were succeeded by their fourth brother, Ethelred. But this rapid succession of sovereigns in some degree deprived the nation of that uniform and steady energy requisite to make head against their untiring enemies ; and, during these years, the Danes continually increased their hold upon the kingdom, bringing over constant reinforcements and overrunning the eastern and northern districts, while some tribes stood aloof from the contest, and others even formed alliances with them. Ethelred died of a wound received in ^{A.D.} 671. battle, and was succeeded by his younger brother, Alfred, whose character, and achievements as a warrior and a lawgiver, and as the first monarch who made the civilization and education of his subjects especial objects of his care, deserve a more particular and honourable mention.

In conformity with other writers I have called Alfred a lawgiver, though it is probable that the labours which have earned that title for him were generally directed rather to the restoration of ancient usages, and the reduction of admitted rules into a methodical system, than to the enactment of many entirely new regulations. And in thinking of the laws of the kingdom in the early ages of English history, we must bear in mind two fundamental differences between those times and our own. In the first place, the early kings of England did not rule over a nation of freemen. A very great portion of the people were slaves or thralls : and, though under the Norman dynasty the name was changed, the institution remained ; nor was there in fact any material amelioration of the condition of this unhappy body till the system of villeinage died out, which it had not done entirely till near the end of the fifteenth century. In the second place, there was no parliament. The Saxon kings were far from absolute sovereigns, and were assisted by a council called the Witenagemote, with whose advice, on all important measures of government, they could not dispense. But this was purely an aristocratic body, composed of the thanes, or great landowners, the earls or rulers of counties, and the bishops, and presided over by the king ; to which the *ceorls*, or commons, sent no representatives, nor were they considered as having a right to the slightest voice in the government. In the earlier stages of society, the power of the judge is more important than that of the lawgiver, the former being in fact often the origin of the latter* ; and the judicial authority among the Anglo-Saxons was vested mainly in the nobles, each of whom was judge in his own district : and the punishment for

* So we read in Herodotus, that the authority of Deloos originated in his being the arbitrator of disputes among his neighbours.

crime, which was more than usually common, was in all cases a pecuniary penalty. Even murder was only punishable by a fine; and the life of every man was valued, in a regular scale, according to his rank; the very sovereign himself having no higher protection than the greatness of the fine to be exacted for his murder: while so ample was the shield that the Church in those days held before her servants, that an archbishop's life was rated more highly than the king's. It is easy to see that such a principle of punishment must have increased both the frequency and atrocity of crimes.

CHAPTER II.

NO monarch ever came to a throne more surrounded with difficulties than Alfred, and no one ever more surmounted them by his own valour, wisdom, and conduct. Yet not only was the beginning of his reign unprosperous, but its disasters were, in a great degree, the result of his own errors. It is commonly unfavourable to the immediate reputation of any person to be in advance of his age; and this drawback was aggravated in Alfred's case by his being aware of his own superiority himself, and by his showing too plainly that he was aware of it. Being imbued with an innate thirst for knowledge, he had, even as a boy, acquired an amount of learning to which few men, in those ages of darkness and ignorance, could make any pretension. He had not only read the works of the Saxon poets and chroniclers, but he had made himself acquainted also with Latin and Greek, and had enriched his mind with those treasures of ancient genius and wisdom of which the study will never be unprofitable, the fascination will never be extinct. Young as he was (he was but twenty-two years of age when he ascended the throne of Wessex), he had visited Rome; and on his travels through the countries on his road, he had gathered also much of that practical wisdom which is derived, by an intelligent mind, from seeing the institutions and observing the characters of different nations. But while his observation had inspired him with a desire for reforming the defective institutions, for dispelling the ignorance, and improving the manners, of his subjects, unfortunately it also taught him a contempt for them in their present state, the open display of which did not render them more inclined to innovations, of which they did not see the necessity, nor could they appreciate the advantage. Full of

youthful ardour, confident in the rectitude of his intentions, and convinced of the benefit to be derived from his proposed measures, he tried to carry them with a high hand. He disdained to conciliate the acquiescence which he thought it sufficient to deserve, and by his peremptory manner gave rise to the unfounded suspicion that he was thinking more of creating an absolute power for himself, than of contributing to the happiness of those on whose prejudices he was trampling, and whose cherished habits he was almost openly insulting.

The injustice of the judges, the oppression of the nobles, he sought to check by making unusual examples, and putting to death, by his own sentence, some of the most conspicuous delinquents. But at the same time he showed that it was not for the sake of the lower classes, who were oppressed by them, that he was thus severe; those he had seen in his foreign travels treated with much greater contempt than was usual in England, and that feeling he had himself imbibed for them. Thus he alienated those who were powerful enough to be oppressors, without attaching to himself the more numerous class of the oppressed, and he was destined in a short time to feel his unpopularity. From the very beginning of his reign he had been constrained to keep up a warfare against the Danes. His military skill, which was considerable for the times, usually secured him the victory, though his impetuosity in seeking to follow up his successes sometimes deprived him of the fruits of it. But at last his subjects grew weary of fighting for a prince who neither loved them nor was loved by them; and when in 879 a fresh body of enemies landed, and advanced into the heart of the kingdom, and sacked Chippenham in Wiltshire, they deserted his standard. Many even quitted the kingdom, and fled to France or Ireland for refuge, till Alfred was left destitute of followers, and was compelled to seek his own safety in flight and disguise. For a time he found shelter in the house of a small Somersetshire farmer, who, ignorant of his rank, employed him in tending his cows; and tradition, which often seems to take a poetical kind of pleasure in preserving anecdotes which mark the vicissitudes of fortune, records that on one occasion the farmer's wife, having trusted him to watch the baking of some cakes on the hearth, scolded him severely when she found them all burnt, the king's mind having been diverted from the attention requisite for the useful task imposed upon him by still weightier considerations about the recovery of his kingdom. When happier times came, the change in the king's fortunes brought with it a corresponding improvement in the condition of his humble protector. Alfred had him carefully educated, and, finding him a man of honesty and ability, procured him ordination, and made him bishop of Winchester.

After a few months Alfred changed his abode, collected a few friends round him, and, in the marshy district above Taunton, still known as Athelney,* from the name that he then gave it, he built himself and his followers some rude huts, from which he made frequent sallies on the Danes, who knew neither the quarter from which, nor the enemy from whose hand the blows came. After a time he was encouraged to more continued and open exertions by a great victory gained, near Barnstaple, by Oddun, earl of Devonshire, over a large body of Danes commanded by Ubba, one of their most celebrated leaders, in which Ubba himself and nearly all his troops were slain, and their enchanted standard, "the Raven," taken. He had been in concealment only a few months, but those few had been sufficient to make his countrymen feel that the pride and arrogance of which they complained in him were more tolerable than the lawless cruelty of the Danes; while confidence in his valour and military skill was increased among those who had been the sharers of his recent exploits.

As soon, therefore, as he judged events ripe for his reappearance he found no difficulty in collecting a formidable army. Having resolved on action, he was not content to rely solely on the secrecy and celerity of his movements for success, but ventured on an act full of personal danger, though facilitated by the slight difference that existed between the Saxon and Danish dialects. He disguised himself as a harper, and entered the enemy's camp as a spy, obtained admission into the tent of Guthrum, the king; and had full leisure to remark the negligence of their arrangements, their disregard of all precautions against surprise, and, in short, the supine security in which their whole army was sunk. Having thus obtained all the information he desired, he marched against them so suddenly, that the first intimation that they received of the existence of his army was derived from seeing it preparing to assail them. The unexpectedness of the attack, the very contempt which they had cherished for the foes whom they had so long oppressed, now contributed to dishearten them, and to incapacitate them from making a vigorous resistance. They were defeated with great slaughter. The exact field of battle is unknown; but, if we may trust those antiquaries who pronounce that the figures of white horses (a white horse was the device on the Saxon banner), cut in more than one place on the Wiltshire and Berkshire downs, were traced in those ages as monuments of Alfred's victories, it must have been near Westbury, on the borders of Salisbury Plain. The defeated Danes fled to a fortress they possessed in the neighbourhood: but Alfred gave them no time to recover from their consternation, pursued them, and in a fortnight compelled them to capitulate.

* He called it *Ethelingay*, the isle of nobles.

late. Guthrum himself consented to embrace Christianity, and to exchange his barbarian name for the Saxon appellation of Athelstan; and Alfred placed him and his people as settlers in the north-eastern districts of the kingdom, which had been nearly depopulated by the ravages of their countrymen in past years.

This single victory was so decisive that it restored peace throughout the whole island, and left Alfred at leisure to proceed with his plans for the improvement of his kingdom. His recent great deeds had effaced his previous unpopularity, and the reverses which had preceded them had taught him moderation and wisdom. He now recognized the great principle, that the happiness of the people, who in his reign began to be known by the name that they have since made so famous, of the English, was his most legitimate object, and he sought to secure it by making it depend on an uniform system of laws, rather than on the arbitrary will of any prince, however generally well-intentioned and discerning. The division of the kingdom into counties, and the subdivision of the counties into hundreds and tythings were not unknown in earlier times, but the troubles of many years had caused it to be but little attended to. Alfred now re-established them as a part of the regular system of government; thus providing for the more easy enforcement of his laws, and the more uniform administration of justice throughout the land. So vigilant and efficacious was the system of police that he introduced, that it is said that he caused golden bracelets to be hung up by the side of the public roads, and that no thief was found hardy enough to venture to lay hands on them. To guide the magistrates in their decisions he collected the laws into a brief code, which, though now lost, served long as the basis of English jurisprudence, and is looked upon by many as the source of what is still called the common law. He laid the foundation of the system of trial by jury, severely punished every instance of corruption or partiality detected in the judges, and gave a further example of his regard for justice by often sitting as judge himself, and devoting the most patient attention to the investigation of apparently unimportant causes.

Feeling too, as the old Roman poet had sung (though it is hardly probable that he had learnt it from his pages), that laws without manners are but of little avail, he applied himself to the removal of the ignorance that almost universally overspread the land to such a degree that, according to his own statement, there was at the time of his accession not one priest south of the Thames who could understand the prayers which he daily repeated, or translate any Latin document. Skilful himself in almost every branch of learning then known, he encouraged all classes in the pursuit of knowledge; he made some degree of education indispensable in all who

sought any public office, erected schools at Oxford, and urged his subjects of every rank to send their children to them, so that he has often been called the founder of that noble university. His desire to omit no means of adding to the education and civilization of his people led him to keep up a constant correspondence with foreign countries, sending many embassies to Rome, where his influence was so great that he procured an exemption from the ordinary imposts for the Saxon schools of that city. He even sent the bishop of Sherborne on a mission to India, to the shrine of St. Thomas, who was believed to have been buried there, and his ambassador brought back many curious productions of that country, while the sending forth of such an expedition greatly increased Alfred's fame among foreign nations.

But he was not lulled by the peace to which he had compelled Guthrum into a false security, or into a forgetfulness of the necessity for providing against future attacks; and his penetration taught him that the most effectual means of defence against foreign enemies was to be found in a naval armament. Accordingly he applied himself to the establishment of such a force with a zeal that entitles him to be considered the founder of the English navy. In a few years he built a fleet of 120 vessels, manned with well-trained seamen, and distributed along the most exposed parts of the coast; and at the same time he improved the inland defences of the kingdom, rebuilt the castles and cities that had been destroyed, constructed new fortifications, and so regulated the military service of the country, as to render it easier for the future both to levy armies with rapidity and to keep them in a state of efficiency as long as the occasion required.

A.D.
881. He lived long enough to reap himself the advantage of these wise measures. Immediately after the defeat of Guthrum, Hasting, the most formidable leader that the Danes had ever had, entered the Thames and occupied Fulham; but, finding himself unsupported by his countrymen, who were dispirited by their recent defeat, he crossed over to France, ravaged all the northern coast of that country, extorted favourable terms from Charles the Simple, and carried his victorious arms even into Italy.

895 Fifteen years afterwards, with increased power and reputation, he returned to the invasion of England, landed in Kent, and began to pillage the southern districts of the kingdom. It would be tedious, and at the present day wholly unprofitable, to trace in its details the long warfare that ensued. Hasting's reputation as a military leader was the first in Europe at the time, but he found himself unequal to cope with the happy mixture of foresight, caution, and boldness which guided the operations of Alfred. Though afflicted with a painful complaint, which scarcely ever left him from

the time of his arriving at manhood till his death, the English king hastened to oppose the invader, sometimes drove him from post to post without giving him any opportunity of fighting on equal terms, surprising his detachments, and cutting off his supplies; sometimes he ventured on a pitched battle, under circumstances so judiciously chosen that he was always victorious: twice he took the wife and children of Hasting prisoners; but each time with a generous magnanimity unprecedented in that fierce age, he declared that he warred not with women and children, loaded them with presents, and sent them back in freedom and honour to his enemy. More than once did the baffled Dane traverse the kingdom from east to west, at one time threatening Exeter, at another penetrating to the Severn and seizing strongholds on the borders of the Welsh territory. His pursuer was as swift in his motions as himself; at last, after three years of incessant warfare, Hasting quitted the island, and returned to France, to console himself for his disappointment in England with the pillage of that rich, and under a feeble king, unwarlike territory.

The short remnant of Alfred's life was occupied in remedying, as far as possible, the evils which this long campaign had inflicted upon the kingdom. The obstacles which it had interposed to the cultivation of the land had caused a famine; the famine brought on a most alarming and general pestilence. But his power, now consolidated over all the southern part of the island, and fortified by a firm alliance with the Welsh, enabled him to triumph over even these misfortunes. By judicious grants he relieved local and temporary distress; by fresh wise regulations he guarded, as far as possible, against the recurrence of such evils in future. But he was not permitted himself to enjoy for any length of time the peace which he had won for his people; the complaint under which he had long laboured, and which the scanty medical skill of that age was
^{A D. 901.} unable to relieve, or even to discover, terminated his life after a glorious reign of thirty years, and he died leaving behind him a reputation not only superior to that of all preceding European monarchs, but even at this day second to that of no sovereign who has ever governed a nation, whether we regard the greatness of his difficulties and the success with which he surmounted them, the beneficial character of his reforms, or the permanent effect which they produced on the happiness and character of his people.

CHAPTER III.

A.D.
901.

ALFRED'S title to the throne would not have been considered valid at the present day, as his elder brother Ethelbert had left infant children; but it was so impossible for a child to govern or defend the kingdom at such a crisis, that his nephews were never mentioned when he was elected to the throne. At his death, however, the eldest of them, named Ethelwald, disputed the succession with his son Edward the Elder, or first sovereign of that name; but he was killed in battle, and Edward remained in undisturbed possession of the throne. He and his son Athelstan, who succeeded him, were able and warlike princes; Athelstan especially, who united to his kingdom the last divisions of the Heptarchy which still remained independent and separate governments. Athelstan had endeavoured to gain over Sigrig, king of Northumberland, by giving him his sister in marriage on his becoming a Christian; but after a short time he renounced both his wife and his new religion, and soon after died before he could feel the effects of Athelstan's resentment. Athelstan overran his kingdom and added it to his own dominions; but Sigrig's son, Anlaf, was not disposed to submit to the loss of his inheritance, and crossed over from Ireland, where he possessed the sovereignty of a small district, to recover his British throne. The Welsh and Scotch, who had already been reduced to the condition of tributary nations by Athelstan, and who bore the unaccustomed yoke with great impatience, gladly joined him, and he procured large reinforcements from Norway and Denmark; Athelstan, too, strengthened himself by various alliances, especially by one with Rollo, prince of Normandy, to meet the coming storm. The armies met; the position and even the name of the field of battle are alike uncertain, but not the event. Anlaf, wishing to surprise Athelstan by a night attack, ventured on the same step which Alfred had taken with such success, penetrating in the disguise of a harper into the hostile camp, and even into the royal tent; but as he disdained to keep the present with which the English monarch had rewarded his minstrelsy, he buried it in the sand on leaving the camp, and this action, being seen by an English soldier, betrayed the real character of the disguised musician, and enabled Athelstan to baffle his attempt. The night attack failed, but the battle by day continued for many years a

favourite theme of national minstrels; none had ever been more stubbornly contested, none had ever been terminated by a more decisive victory. Anlaf himself fled, but he left no less than five kings, his allies, dead upon the field. Athelstan was now master of the whole island; but Scotland and Wales he restored to their former sovereigns, declaring that he would rather bestow kingdoms than enjoy them, being contented himself with the glory of being the first monarch who ever exerted actual kingly power over all the divisions of the Heptarchy.

The glory of his victory is not to be measured merely by the acquisition of territory which it secured; it raised his renown to a pitch higher even than that of Alfred among foreign nations; his protection was implored by princes in distress, his alliance was courted by those enjoying the greatest prosperity; the ruler of Brittany, when expelled by the Normans, found a refuge at his court; Henry the Fowler, the great emperor of Germany, begged his sister in marriage for his son Otho, while so great was his influence over the French nobles, that it was chiefly through his interposition that they conferred the crown of their kingdom on his nephew Louis, who, on the dethronement of his father, Charles the Simple, had, while only in his third year, been brought to England by his mother, and carefully educated by Edward the Elder and Athelstan; and when Louis, the fourth French monarch of that name, was seated on the throne, as he was for some time disquieted by hostilities threatened from abroad, and by a seditious spirit constantly displaying itself at home, Athelstan engaged to send a fleet to his support, thus making with him the first military alliance ever contracted by England with a foreign power.

Harold Harfagre, king of Norway, was one of the wisest princes of his day; he too sent his eldest son Haco to be educated in England, and the Norwegians traced much of the happiness they enjoyed under his firm and equitable rule to the wise precepts, and still more beneficial example, of the great king of England. Alfred had raised a navy for the defence of the kingdom, and Athelstan sought to direct the rising maritime spirit of the people into the channel to which it has since owed a great portion of its power and opulence; encouraging commerce by a regulation, that any merchant who had made three sea-voyages on his own account should be admitted to the rank of a thane; a title previously confined to the greatest landowners and men of noblest birth in the kingdom. His death, after a glorious reign of seventeen years, was nearly fatal to the power which he had consolidated; for Anlaf renewed his invasion of England with such success, that after one or two bloody battles, Edmund, who had succeeded to the throne, was forced to consent to divide the kingdom with him, and

to agree to the condition that the survivor should be sovereign of the whole. But Anlaf died the next year, and Edmund, then relieved from all fear of foreign enemies, completed the expulsion of the Danes, whom Athelstan had left in the possession of a few towns* in the centre of the kingdom.

A.D. 948. After a short reign, Edmund was murdered by a bandit named Leof; and his brother Edred completed the consolidation of England into one monarchy by the defeat and slaughter of Eric, to whom Athelstan had given Northumberland, and who provoked his indignation by using that kingdom only as a stronghold in which to maintain a band of pirates, with whom he scoured the ocean, and pillaged all the dwellers on the neighbouring coasts. Having always had a sickly constitution, Edred died at an early age; and was succeeded by his nephew Edwy, a son of the former king Edmund, whose reign is remarkable as the first in which ecclesiastics in England began to exert political power, and to claim for the Church a right of interfering in the temporal concerns of princes and nations. Odo, whose father had been a Danish pirate, and who had distinguished himself as a gallant soldier in the great battle in which Athelstan drove Anlaf from his throne, had become a Benedictine monk, and had gradually risen to be archbishop of Canterbury; in his new dignity he desired to reform the clergy of the kingdom, whose ignorance and immorality afforded ample room for improvement. His coadjutor, who soon took the lead which commanding talents, seconded by the most unscrupulous fanaticism, easily gave him, was Dunstan, whose abilities and accomplishments had procured him an introduction to king Edmund, obtained for him the abbacy of Glastonbury, and made him the confidential adviser of Edred. His skill in nearly every branch of learning then known was so great, that it was attributed by his enemies to sorcery; and he did not disdain to increase his influence over the multitude by the most monstrous impostures. Aiming at a character for asceticism, which in those days was thought to invest its professor with a peculiar sanctity, he excavated for himself a cell under ground scarcely bigger than a grave, where he devoted himself to study; and, among other arts, to that of working in metals. One night the neighbourhood was disturbed with strange howlings, and Dunstan acquired the reputation of a saint by declaring that as he was at work the devil had come to his cell, that he had seized Satan by the nose with his red-hot pincers, and that the howlings which had been heard, were those extorted from him by the pain thus inflicted by the undaunted saint. At one time he announced to the king that St. Peter had appeared to him in a vision, had

* The towns were Derby, Leicester, Nottingham, Stamford, and Doncaster, which, as Dean Hook (*Lives of Archbishops*, I., 394) shews, "had formed a chain of fortresses placing Mercia and East Anglia at the mercy of the enemy."

beaten him for refusing the bishopric of Winchester, and had promised him the primacy; at another he declared that angels from heaven had communicated to him the death of Edred while he was at a distance from him. When, by these fables, he had created a general belief in his holiness, and in the favour with which he was regarded by the Deity, he proceeded to grasp power by more violent means. King Edwy had married his cousin Elgiva, and on the day of his coronation had retired early from the banquet to enjoy her society; Odo sent Dunstan to bring him back, who forced his way into the king's presence, reviled him and the queen, and dragged him by force back to the banqueting hall; and when Edwy, in just indignation, deprived Dunstan of his preferment and banished him, Odo proceeded to declare his marriage void on account of the relationship existing between him and the queen; and, as he refused to submit to this sentence, the archbishop seized Elgiva, burnt her face with hot irons in the hope of destroying her beauty, and banished her to Ireland. Unhappily for herself, her wounds healed, and she returned with undiminished charms to resume her empire over her husband's heart; he seized her a second time, hamstrung her, and when she had died of her sufferings, raised a rebellion against her husband, set up his younger brother Edgar, ^{A.D. 959.} a boy of thirteen, as his rival, and deprived him of all the northern part of the kingdom. Odo died; and Dunstan, who had returned to England, and had succeeded him as archbishop, for a while governed those districts in Edgar's name; and when, on Edwy's death, Edgar became the sole sovereign, Dunstan was in effect the ruler of the whole realm. His chief object appeared to be the suppression, or at least the depression, of the secular clergy, and the aggrandizement of the monastic orders, and especially of that order to which he himself belonged, in their stead; and to such a degree had he inspired his royal pupil with his own feelings, that Edgar, when he came of age, boasted that he had already founded forty-seven monasteries, and hoped soon to complete the number to fifty.

When Edgar became of an age to think and act for himself, his chief anxiety was to gratify his passions and his pride, and Dunstan connived at all his excesses, thinking them more than atoned for by his co-operation with himself in his own designs; though the king's passions impelled him to murder his friend in order to seduce his wife, and to violate the sanctity of a convent in order to possess himself by force of a nun whom he admired; and his pride led him to compel eight kings, who came to Chester to do him homage, to take the place of his servants, and to row him and his nobles in a gilded vessel down the Dee.

He was very successful as a warrior, clearing the adjacent

islands of pirates, invading, and according to his own account, subduing Dublin, and the greater part of Ireland and Wales, where, as that country was greatly infested by wolves, which bred among its mountains and descended from them to the more cultivated parts of the island, he changed the tribute imposed upon it by Athelstan into an annual offering of three hundred wolves' heads, a regulation which soon led to their total extirpation. More beneficial still were his measures for the reformation of the coinage, the art of clipping which (so often the cause of distress and complaint in subsequent times) had already begun to be practised; for the protection of the laws, which he himself upheld, by making constant journeys through the kingdom to inquire into abuses; and for the encouragement both of internal trade and of foreign commerce, which had previously been eagerly promoted by Athelstan, and now derived fresh vigour from Edgar's judicious treatment of Saxon and Flemish merchants. On Edgar's death, A.D. 975. Edward, his eldest son, from his tragical end, known in English history as Edward the Martyr, was his natural successor, but the fact of Dunstan espousing his cause stimulated those who wished to strengthen the secular clergy in opposition to the increasing power and number of the monks, to set up a competitor to the throne in the person of his younger half-brother, Ethelred, whose mother Elfrida, an intriguing unscrupulous woman, had availed herself of the religious dissensions (proverbially the bitterest of all causes of hatred) which distracted the land, to raise a strong party in his behalf. Great tumults ensued, which Dunstan hoped to terminate by crowning Edward at Kingston; but this step, which did, in effect, put an end to the disputes about the succession, only increased the disorder which prevailed throughout the kingdom, as Dunstan's success encouraged him to greater violence against the clergy who did not belong to his favourite order, and against their supporters. To countenance his own proceedings, and to daunt his opponents, he again had recourse to those impostures which the Church of Rome has at all times been too willing to practise or to sanction. On one occasion he contrived that a crucifix should pronounce a decisive sentence in his favour. On another, having convened a council of nobles in an upper room at Calne, from which he kept the king away, he declared that "he committed the cause of the Church to the decision of Christ," and instantly the whole floor, except that portion of it on which his own chair was placed, sank beneath the assembled councillors, many of whom were killed on the spot, while others were severely injured. Dunstan appealed to the event as a miraculous interposition of the Deity in favour of true religion. but every one else regarded it as a contrivance of his own, which

only proved that no crime could be too great for him to commit, if it seemed likely to further his objects.

This atrocity, however, only stimulated his adversaries to the commission of similar crimes, and as the king was now on the point of coming of age, and seemed wholly devoted to the archbishop, it was determined to murder him; and in a casual hunting visit which he paid to Elfrida, at Corfe Castle, he was stabbed while in the act ^{of drinking a cup of wine, which she herself brought him, and} ^{was succeeded by Ethelred, a child of ten years old, whose reign} was longer than that of any of his predecessors, but full of disgrace to himself, and calamity to his people.

His accession, however, failed to benefit the party that had brought it about as much as they had expected. Many even of those who hated Dunstan, recoiled from the idea of allowing power to remain in the hands of a woman like Elfrida, who could contrive the murder of her stepson at her own door. Dunstan availed himself of the disgust that her crime had excited, which, as being more recent, had apparently effaced the recollection of his own, to drive her into a cloister, and to obtain the same supreme direction of affairs under Ethelred, that he had enjoyed under Edward.

But the distracted state of the kingdom, produced by his factious elevation of the monks at the expense of the other clergy, invited the Danes to renew their invasions. The very next year they descended on the southern coast, ravaged Devonshire and Dorsetshire, and, after a few years, their attacks became periodical, and so formidable that Ethelred, whose timid disposition had procured him the nickname of "the Unready," adopted the weak and shameful advice of Siric, the successor of Dunstan, and bribed the Danes with a large sum of money to return to their own land. Such pusillanimity could have no other effect than that of tempting the invaders to repeat an aggression that proved so profitable. They returned a second time; a large fleet was collected to oppose them, and was placed under the command of Alfric, duke of Mercia, who betrayed it to the enemy; though so miserably weak was the government, that his treason did not prevent his being again intrusted with the command. The sixteenth year of Ethelred's reign brought a more formidable invasion than had yet been experienced. Olave, son of the king of Norway, and Sweyn, king of Denmark, sailed up the Thames with ninety-four ships, and, though their attempt on London was frustrated by the valour of the citizens, ravaged the southern part of the kingdom, till the cowardly monarch again bought them off by the payment of a larger sum than before. The princes received 16,000*l.* as the price of their retreat; Olave also submitted to be baptized as a Christian, and when, having quarrelled with Sweyn, he was defeated and killed by him in battle,

he was canonized as St. Olave by the Church of Rome. He had considered himself bound never to renew his invasion; but the less scrupulous Sweyn returned again in a short time, and exacted a fresh payment of 24,000*l.*, his attempts being invariably seconded by the treasonable co-operation of some of the English nobles.

To bribe invaders to retreat was base and foolish enough; but the measure to which Ethelred presently had recourse, to strike terror into those whom he found that his previous conduct had only allured, was still more base and still more foolish. The abolition of the Danish power in England under the vigorous rule of Alfred and Athelstan had not only not been accompanied by the expulsion of those of that country who were willing to remain as peaceful inhabitants and loyal subjects, but Athelstan and Edgar had kept a considerable body of Danes in their pay as soldiers: and it was not unnatural that these men should sympathize with their countrymen when endeavouring to recover their footing in the island; that they should fight against them unwillingly, and occasionally desert to them, and betray their English masters. Some of Ethelred's advisers now suggested to him the idea of exterminating them, and the wretched prince issued the order for a deed which, though imitated and even surpassed in atrocity in subsequent ages by the Sicilian Vespers, and the still more notorious massacre of St. Bartholomew, stamps his name with indelible infamy, showing that no degree of natural ferocity can make a man as cruel as cowardice, and that no vice is so fatal in a ruler as weakness. On St. Bride's day, Nov. 14, 1002, every one of Danish blood in England was assassinated in cold blood. The very altars and churches were no protection to those who fled to them as a sanctuary and asylum; even Gunhilda, the sister of Sweyn, who had married an English noble, found that the connexion with her involved her husband and child in the same destruction, and was murdered by Ethelred's emissaries, after seeing them both butchered before her eyes.

This unprecedented crime was not only useless, but pernicious. The news soon reached Denmark, and gave Sweyn a fair pretext to renew his attacks on England as the avenger of the blood of his murdered countrymen. Again the command of the English army was intrusted to Alfric, again he betrayed it, and after his death he was succeeded by Edric, Ethelred's son-in-law, who proved a worse traitor still. It was in vain that a large fleet was collected to oppose the invaders; the treachery of its leader frustrated every project of defence. Time after time did the wretched Ethelred endeavour to buy off his enemies with increasing sums of money, till at last, as Emma his queen was a sister of Richard, duke of Normandy, he fled with her and his children to his brother-in-law's

court, and the English nobles swore allegiance to Sweyn as king, and gave him hostages for their fidelity.

Sweyn soon died, and the chief men of the nation invited Ethelred to return and resume the government, on condition of ruling with greater equity and moderation for the future. Ethelred, however, was incapable of learning wisdom or humanity even from the stern teaching of adversity. Courage was still more alien to his nature; and he had more need than ever both of wisdom and of courage, for Sweyn's son, Canute, was deficient in no quality requisite to make his pretensions formidable, though his valour was as yet sullied by barbarian ferocity, which he laid aside when age had taught him reflection, and success (which never produces such effects save in magnanimous natures) had softened his disposition. In the first paroxysms of anger at what he considered the revolt of the English, he cruelly mutilated the hostages who had been delivered to his father, landed them on the Kentish coast, and


^{A.D.} ^{1013.} invaded the kingdom with a numerous army. Edric joined him with a large portion of the English fleet. Ethelred died in 1013, and Edmund, his eldest son, who succeeded him, and whose valour earned him the appellation of Ironside, found his efforts for the defence of the land paralysed by the treachery of some, and the pusillanimity of others among his subjects, till, though not always defeated, he was forced to consent to divide the kingdom with the Dane. But in the third year of his reign he was assassinated by Edric, and Canute enjoyed the undivided sovereignty of the island.

^{1016.} The opening of his reign held out but little prospect of tranquillity or happiness to the nation. The readiness with which the nobles had recalled Ethelred, after the death of Sweyn, had made him suspicious of every one, and to secure his own power he put to death many of the most eminent and powerful men in the kingdom, and especially those of royal blood. Edmund's brother Edwy was one of his victims: and though he feared the greater popularity of Edward and Edwin the sons of Ironside too much to treat them in the same manner in England, he sent them to Sweden, intending that they should be put to death there. But the king of Sweden suffered them to escape; and Edward, marrying the daughter of the emperor Henry, became the father of a prince named Edgar, known from his royal birth as the Atheling, who was the true heir to the throne; and who, as we shall hereafter see, after the conquest, was set up by the English as a rival of William, and was for many years the rock in which the Saxons trusted as their last hope of escape from the foreign tyranny of the Normans.

Cruelty, however, was not natural to Canute, and was only practised by him in obedience to what he believed to be the stern necessity of his political situation; and as soon as he felt secure

that he had removed all rivals, and crushed every thought of insurrection, his sway grew mild and beneficent. He levied, indeed, vast sums of money on the kingdom, the amount of which proved, even at that early period, its great comparative opulence. But he took many opportunities of showing his confidence in his English subjects, sending to their own country the greater portion of his Danish army; and when, nine years after his accession, the Swedes invaded Denmark, and he gained a victory, which was mainly attributable to the valour of his English soldiers, and the skill of earl Godwin, their leader, his gratitude led him not only to give his daughter in marriage to the general, but, from that time forth, to regard the whole nation with especial favour and affection.

CHAPTER IV.

MONG the many instances in which fortune and conduct have combined to raise to eminence and power persons whose birth seemed to exclude them from any such distinction, there have been few more remarkable than that of Godwin, who, though the son of a peasant, and employed till the age of manhood as a neatherd, lived to become a general and a conqueror, the most powerful of the English nobles, the son-in-law of one king, and the father of another. After one of the battles which king Edmund had won from the Danes in his manly but vain efforts for the independence of his country, a Danish captain, high in the favour of Canute, had been separated from his comrades, and, losing his way, had wandered all night in the woods of Warwickshire. In the morning he fell in with Godwin as he was driving his father's oxen to the field, implored his aid, and offered him a valuable ring to induce him to guide him to the Danish army. The Danes were hated by the country people, and there was no hope of quarter for such an enemy if discovered, or of pardon for any person who sheltered or saved one. Godwin, however, though he rejected the bribe, promised out of compassion to conduct him to his countrymen, lodged him for the day in his father's hut, and, when they set out at dusk on a journey which made it unsafe for the Saxon to return to his own people, the Dane promised him employment in Canute's service. They reached the camp in safety; and his gratitude was not contented with the bare performance of his promise. He treated his guide as his own son, in time procured

him a command, and, as Godwin displayed great military and political talent, and as Canute was a prince well able to appreciate and inclined to reward excellence, he rapidly rose to be governor of a province, and the most powerful noble in the whole kingdom.

When Canute had established his authority over the whole of England, he sought to extend his dominions. He invaded Scotland, defeated king Malcolm, and conquered the greater part of that country. But the more his exploits raised him above other men, the more plainly did he perceive, and the more acutely did he feel the great fact, that there was a power superior to his own, which he was not only powerless to control, but to which he was himself responsible; and, in the latter part of his reign, he tried by his example to inculcate these ideas on his subjects. On one occasion, having killed a man in a fit of intemperance, he confessed his fault before the judges, and demanded that they should impose on him a penalty proportioned to his offence. More widely celebrated is his reproof of his flattering courtiers. They professed to believe that every thing was in the power of one who had performed such great deeds, and who ruled over such vast dominions. He caused his chair to be set on the sea-shore while the tide was rising, and in a loud voice commanded the ocean to stay his proud waves, and to approach no nearer to his sovereign. The sea, regardless of the mandate, rose till it washed the robes and feet of the king, who then pointed out to his followers that the power which even the winds and the sea obey was one mightier than his own; and from that time forth he would never wear his crown. Nor did he confine his devotion to empty words or barren displays of humility. He rebuilt the churches which were burnt by his countrymen; he founded convents; he undertook a journey to Rome, where he remained some time, during which he procured from the pope many exemptions and privileges for his English subjects who travelled to or resided in that city.

He had married Emma, the widow of Ethelred, stipulating with her brother Richard, Duke of Normandy, that his children by her should succeed him on the English throne; but as Richard was dead he altered that arrangement, and, leaving Hardicanute, Emma's son, the kingdom of Denmark, he bequeathed England to Harold, surnamed Harefoot, his son by a previous marriage.

A.D. 1035. At his death, however, in 1035, though the Danish inhabitants of the island were pleased with this disposition, the English were not inclined to acquiesce in it. They looked on Hardicanute as their countryman; and a civil war between the two brothers was only prevented by a division of the kingdom. Hardicanute himself was absent at the time of his father's death, and his cause had been maintained by his mother Emma and some of the nobles, of

whom Godwin was the chief ; but, before he arrived in England to take possession of his part of the island, earl Godwin had been gained over by Harold. The defection of him to whom they had looked as their leader, only increased the resolution of the English not to submit to one whom they considered a foreigner ; and Ethelnoth, the archbishop, refused to crown him. Harold, brutal rather than brave, conceived a hatred to the Church on account of this act of its chief minister, and took every opportunity to show his contempt for religion.

His reign, which lasted only four years, is remarkable for nothing but the death of Alfred, one of the sons of Ethelred, all the circumstances of which are buried in obscurity, though the report of his having been betrayed by Godwin was so universal, that in the next reign he was formally accused of having been accessory to the prince's murder, and only obtained his acquittal by the most costly presents. Hardicanute, who on his death succeeded to the peaceful possession of the whole kingdom, was detested for his cruelty and rapacity ; and, dying after a short reign of two years, was succeeded by Edward, the surviving son of Ethelred, who happened to be in England at that time ; and who now reconciled himself to Godwin, though he had formerly accused him of the murder of his brother, and married his daughter Edith.

A.D.
1041. Edward, to whom for his subservience to their dictates, the monks, the only historians of that age, gave the name of the Confessor, was, for the greater part of his reign, a very fortunate sovereign. He was the son of Ethelred by a second wife ; Emma the sister of Richard Duke of Normandy : who, on the death of her husband, had fled with him and his brother Alfred to her brother for protection, and the two children were carefully educated by their uncle ; who at one time even meditated making war upon Canute on their behalf. His accession was hailed with gladness by the people, who were disgusted with the vices of the two last kings, and who saw in him the representative of their old English line of sovereigns ; but after a time the exclusive favour which he showed to the Normans, the consequence of his long residence at his uncle's court, greatly diminished his popularity, and excited the jealousy of the nobles, and especially of earl Godwin. But Godwin's discontent might possibly have been confined to remonstrances, for, powerful as he was, he was not able by himself to compel Edward to a change of policy ; and other earls, such as Leofric of Mercia, and Siward of Northumberland, but little inferior in authority to himself, were more jealous of him than of the foreigners, and were likely to side with the king against him, when the insolence of a newly arrived Norman brought matters to a head. Eustace, count of Boulogne, who had married Edward's

sister, coming on a visit to his brother-in-law, marched into Dover at the head of a numerous retinue, fully armed, as if they were taking possession of a conquered town, selecting the best houses to lodge in, and compelling the owners to admit them by force of arms. Most of the citizens were terrified into submission, but one high-spirited man refused to acquiesce in such an insolent ejection from his own property; on which the Norman who selected his house drew his sword and wounded him, and in the fray which ensued was killed by the Englishman. Eustace made this act of self-defence a plea for a general attack on the citizens; he and his men forced the Englishman's house, slew him and his family, and traversed the town sword in hand, cutting down and trampling under foot even women and children, till the citizens collected in sufficient numbers to defend themselves, when they slew several of the Normans, and drove the rest out of the town. Eustace laid his complaint before Edward, who without further inquiry, ordered Godwin, in whose government Dover was situated, to take vengeance on the inhabitants; and when Godwin refused, and, laying all the blame on Eustace, demanded that he and his followers should be brought to trial, Edward impeached him before his council, and procured his banishment, and that of all his family, carrying his resentment towards him to such an extent as even to put away the queen because she was his daughter, and to confine her in a convent.

A.D.
1042. Godwin fled to Flanders, and the Norman influence became more predominant than ever at the English court. Among others, William, the duke of Normandy, paid a visit to Edward, and was entertained with great magnificence. He had been a favourite of Edward's from his boyhood, and, if his own assertion may be credited, had long before received from him a promise of being appointed his heir, if he himself should ever attain the throne of England.

Godwin was not inclined to submit unresistingly to the banishment and ruin of his family, but collected a large fleet and returned to England, where he was joined by his eldest son Harold, who had raised a formidable force in Ireland; and, as the disaffection of the English nobles and their jealousy of the Normans increased every day, his party speedily became strong enough to compel the king to reverse the sentence passed against him, to restore him to his former rank, and to banish the Normans from the kingdom, as enemies of the public peace; while Godwin, on his part, placed his youngest son and one of his grandsons in Edward's hands as hostages for his future loyalty, and allowed them to be committed to the care of the duke of Normandy. Godwin died soon afterwards, and Edward invested Harold with all his dignities; and on the death

of Siward, as his son Waltheof was a minor, the government of Northumberland was given to Tostig, another of the sons of Godwin.

Harold succeeded to all his father's popularity among his countrymen, and added to it by his own conduct; he defeated the Welsh, who, encouraged by the divisions in England, had harassed the frontier with repeated invasions, and by his moderation he pacified the Northumbrians, who had been provoked by Tostig's oppressions to expel him, and to choose a grandson of Leofric for their governor. And, as he treated Edward with uniform respect and deference, he gained his favour also, so that the annalists of the time tell us that the king loved him as his own son. He was naturally anxious for the restoration of his son and nephew, who had been given up as hostages to Edward, and, as has been already mentioned, had been sent to Normandy; and Edward willingly consented to their return, but was greatly concerned to find that Harold designed himself to cross the sea to fetch them, warning him not to put himself in the power of one whom he rightly described as crafty and unscrupulous. His forebodings proved too true; William received Harold with great honour, sharing with him his tent and table; invested him with the order of knighthood, which had but lately been introduced on the Continent, and was as yet unknown in England; but availed himself of his position to extort from him a promise to marry his daughter, to deliver to him the Castle of Dover, and to assist him in obtaining the crown of England, which he declared that Edward had promised to him; afterwards, in a general assembly of the barons of Normandy, he compelled him to confirm his promise by an oath; and when he had sworn religiously to observe it, he showed him that the Gospel, on which he had laid his hand, was resting on a chest of bones and relics of saints and martyrs which William had collected for the purpose, and which, in that age of ignorant superstition, were believed to add a very great degree of sanctity to an oath, of which the saints were thus in a manner brought as witnesses.

On his return to England Harold related what had passed to Edward, who was deeply grieved at the evils which he now perceived that his former attachment to foreigners was preparing for his kingdom. His health had for some time been failing, and anxiety ^{A.D.} and distress soon destroyed all hope of his recovery: on the 1066. 5th of January, 1066, he died, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-fifth of his reign; leaving no children, but recommending Harold, who had married his sister, to his nobles as most worthy to be his successor.

In those days even the eldest son of the previous sovereign was not considered king till that rank had been bestowed on him by

the election of the nobles : and there had been, and were afterwards occasions when the throne was actually vacant for some weeks ; but now (since William's pretensions to the throne were well known) the emergency was too pressing to admit of delay, and the very next day Harold was elected king, and anointed by Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, who, in spite of the remonstrances of the pope, had been appointed to that dignity on the expulsion of the Norman Robert. It was not from one quarter only that he had to apprehend hostility ; Tostig, to whose expulsion from his Northumbrian government he had consented, hastened to William, whose wife's sister he had married, to inflame him against his brother, and to offer his aid for the instant invasion of England ; but William, who had resolved on his plans too fully to be precipitate, merely gave him a few vessels, with which he sailed to Norway to seek the aid of Harold Hardrada, king of that country, who was eager to seize any pretence for invading any territory more opulent than his own.

Though he had refused to commit himself to any union with Tostig, William had no intention of abandoning his claim upon the English throne. As soon as the news of Harold's coronation reached him, he sent an envoy to remind him of his oath, and to demand the surrender of the kingdom. Harold answered that the oath was invalid, as having been extorted by force ; that if it were not, he had neither the right nor the power to give away the sovereignty over a free country, of which he had been declared the heir by the late king ; which the whole nation had since formally conferred on him ; and of which his countrymen alone could deprive him ; and he replied to the demand, that he should fulfil his promise of taking William's daughter for his wife, by marrying the sister of the earls Edwin and Morcar, the grandsons of Leofric, the deceased earl of Mercia.

William prepared for war, and, not undervaluing the greatness of the enterprise which he meditated, sought for aid from all quarters. The pope gladly declared Harold a perjurer, and William the rightful heir of Edward, sending him a ring containing a hair from the head of St. Peter, a standard which had received the apostolic benediction, and a bull formally declaring him king of England. But when William applied for aid to the king of France, offering to do him homage for England when he should have subdued it, he found that Philip was not inclined to promote the aggrandizement of a vassal who was already too powerful ; and Baldwin, count of Flanders, though his brother-in-law, feared him as a neighbour more than he loved him as a connexion, and also refused him assistance. The aid, however, which he could not procure from the princes, he obtained abundantly from their subjects. Many were willing to enlist in a cause sanctioned by the Church ; more were attracted by the

hopes of plunder which William held out to every one who should join him ; and his promises were as varied in their kind as they were liberal in magnitude. Some were ensured an estate ; others, a castle or a town. On some he engaged to bestow well-dowered English wives : to one powerful baron he promised an English bishopric. Workmen in every port in Normandy were busy in building and repairing ships for the passage of the Channel. Every inland town resounded with the hammers of smiths and armourers, forging spears, swords, and coats of mail. Every road was almost blocked up with waggons conveying to the rendezvous provisions for the support of the vast army which was rapidly assembling. Every part of his conduct, and almost every place in his dominions, gave indications of the resolution and foresight with which the ambitious prince was preparing for the invasion of a country more extensive and more opulent than his own, whose numerous population was inured to war, and eager to fight under a leader whom they loved, and in whose valour and military skill they deservedly confided.

When all was ready, foul winds kept the fleet in harbour for above a month ; but towards the end of September the wind changed, and on the 28th William landed, at the head of 60,000 men, at Pevensey, on the coast of Sussex. The delay that had taken place was favourable to him, for, just at this time, a powerful fleet, which Harold had stationed off the coast to intercept him, had retired to procure a fresh stock of provisions, so that William met with no obstacle to his passage. He himself was one of the first that landed. As he sprang from the boat, he stumbled, and fell on his face. "A bad omen," said one of his soldiers. "Not so," rejoined the duke. "I have taken possession of England. See, I hold it in both my hands."

But a short time earlier Tostig and Hardrada at the head of a numerous and ferocious army, swollen by contingents from Scotland and Ireland, had landed in the north of England, defeated Edwin and Morcar, and shut them up in York, which they besieged ; but Harold, who had great military talents, hastened to the relief of the earls, and five days afterwards confronted the invaders with an army superior to their own. His first step was to seek accommodation with his brother, offering to reinstate him in his government of Northumberland. "What," said the British prince, "will you give Hardrada, my ally ?" "Seven feet of English ground for a grave," replied the envoy of Harold ; "or, as Hardrada is a giant, he may perhaps have a foot more." Tostig's only virtue was fidelity to his ally, and he refused the conditions offered to him. In the battle which ensued at Stanford Bridge, near York, both he and his ally were slain.

But Harold had not completed his arrangements for the establishment of tranquillity in the north when he received intelligence of the more formidable danger that threatened him in the south. It was on the 25th of September that he won his victory over the Norwegian invader ; six days later he was seated amid his chief warriors at York, celebrating a feast in honour of his triumph, when the banquet was interrupted by a Sussex thane who had ridden day and night with the news of William's landing, which he had himself witnessed. Harold had shown his possession in an eminent degree of the military qualities of decision and rapidity of movement in the speed with which, though labouring under an attack of sickness, he had traversed the kingdom from its Southern coast to Yorkshire to encounter Hardrada and his allies ; and he was not likely to be more slack when assailed by what he well knew to be a far more formidable danger. With the promptitude and vigour of one born for command he quitted the banquet hall for the council board ; and announced his purpose of instantly returning to the south. Too many of those who should have followed him had fallen, or been, for the time, disabled by the recent battle ; many too had returned to their homes with their wives, but the rest cheerfully obeyed a summons of which they acknowledged the wisdom and the necessity ; and with all the force that was at hand he hastened towards London, marching with such speed that on the 5th of October he reached the city which was beginning to be accounted the capital of the kingdom. Here a few days were of necessity consumed in waiting for the arriving of troops, and in making other preparations calculated to give a prospect of success in the battle which, it was plain, must decide the dispute between him and his enemy ; preparations which were varied but not interrupted by a renewal of William's previous demand that Harold should resign the crown to him ; and of the king's peremptory rejection of the demand, as insulting to himself and injurious to his people. Harold, indeed, was not inflexibly bent on perpetual hostility. If the Norman duke would return to his lawful dominions, the English king would be his friend and ally, and would bestow on him liberal and honourable presents. But, if William were bent on war, war it should be, and before the week was out Harold would meet him in the field. Neither king nor duke could have expected the peaceful solution of the quarrel. But as the day of battle drew near, though Harold's heart did not fail him, his brother Gurth became overwhelmed with anxiety. In a hand to hand conflict, in which the king must be the actual leader of his men, he would be, at least as much if not more, exposed to danger than the meanest of his followers, and even should his army be victorious, the loss of his own life would entail

all the consequences of a defeat. The death of any other commander in chief, even were he the king's brother, would be politically unimportant. Moreover, the oath in which William had entangled Harold, however valid or invalid it might be, certainly bound no one but himself; and, therefore, Gurth's counsel and entreaty to his brother and sovereign was that Harold should entrust the command of the army to himself. To him even William could not impute perjury; his own life or death were matters of no moment; and of his capacity for command, and of his courage in the conflict, Harold could entertain no doubt. It was prudent as well as brotherly advice. But Harold thought, still more wisely, that the considerations which forbade him to appear to shrink from the coming conflict were of still greater weight; and that too great a regard for his personal safety did not become a monarch whose crown was at stake. Accordingly, on the 12th of October he quitted his capital and marched towards the enemy; large reinforcements joined him as he proceeded; but there is no trustworthy record of the numbers with which, on the next evening, he reached the spot which he had already selected as the field of battle. It was a table land of no great height, about seven miles to the north of Hastings, according to one account known to the men of that age as the hill of Senlac, though Hastings itself, probably because that had for the last fortnight been the place where William's camp had been pitched, has given its name to the battle.* Here he purposed to await the attack which he doubted not that William would launch at him as soon as he should learn his arrival. Indeed the Normans had so ravaged and wasted the country around that scarcity of supplies must soon compel them to move onward; and they could not advance without passing Harold's position, which, according to the customs of Saxon warfare, he at once began to fortify with a stout palisade of about five feet high; with occasional openings through which the garrison could, indeed, sally out, but which no assailant could enter without certain destruction. It was not unlike the stockades with which, in their warfare with the half-civilised tribes of the Eastern Ocean, our troops to this day find themselves confronted. Such a defence was quickly raised, and William found it fully completed when the next morning, at about nine o'clock, he rode up the rising ground at the head of his army; he at once attacked it in the centre and at both

* Mr. Freeman, relying on one Chronicler (Ordericus Vitalis) who mentions that the hill on which the battle was fought was known as Senlac, speaks of the battle under the name of the battle of Senlac throughout his work. On all the circumstances and details of the Norman invasion, Mr. Freeman's authority is of the greatest value. The brilliant vigour of his description of the fight itself has been universally acknowledged; but I hesitate to follow him in abandoning the name for the battle which was adopted from the first by both the conquerors and the conquered, and which has ever since been sanctioned by the uninterrupted use of 800 years.

ends ; his archers (the bow was the weapon of the Norman, but not yet of the English infantry) seeking to drive back the defenders of the palisade by a storm of strongly shot and well aimed arrows. For hours the conflict was as stubborn as any that England had ever seen. Many leaders fell on both sides ; three times William himself was brought to the ground by the death of his charger ; and at one time his defeat seemed imminent, for one large division of his army turned and fled. But this flight, little as it deserved such a reward, brought about a change in the fortunes of the day. The troops who were more immediately opposed to the fugitives, forgetful of Harold's orders, under all circumstances to remain steady in their position, pursued, and inevitably became disordered by their own impetuosity. William and his brother Odo, who though a bishop, was as eager for, and as as mighty in battle as any lay baron, rallied the affrighted bands, who, eager to retrieve the disgrace of their panic, turned upon their pursuers, more breathless and now in greater confusion than themselves ; numbers of the English fell beneath their fury ; and William, seeing how this rout of his men, though caused by real terror, had turned to his advantage, bade another division fall back in equally apparent but more measured flight, in the hope that a fresh temptation might throw another English battalion into similar disorder ; his plan succeeded to his wish ; the new fugitives were chased with the same headlong impetuosity, and now the Normans were enabled to force their way into the English entrenchment thus denuded of the whole of those who ought to have been its defenders. Yet, though thus placed at great disadvantage, Harold still maintained the fight, and the shades of evening seemed about to fall on a drawn battle, when he was wounded in the eye with an arrow ; and sank in defenceless agony at the foot of his standard. The wound was probably mortal, but while he lay helpless on the ground, a body of Norman knights forced their way to the spot where he had been seen to fall, and one heavy blow struck off his head. Gurth and another of his brothers had already fallen, and no leader remained unwounded, of skill and influence to head any further resistance.

William's victory was complete, though it is probable that the slaughter of the Normans in the battle at least equalled, if it did exceed, that of the English. But, as he himself was safe, no loss which he could sustain was irreparable. He returned to Hastings, where, after a few days, reinforcements from Normandy raised his army to its former strength. Meanwhile, the Witan, or great national council, chose Edgar the Atheling for their king ; but though the choice was justified, if not forced upon them by the circumstance of his being the sole representative of the line of their

ancient sovereigns, there was no real chance of his being able to maintain the throne against William, for he was young, and undistinguished by either civil or military ability. Even the unanimous choice of his countrymen could not inspire him with energy to fight for the crown they conferred upon him. William was less wanting to himself; at the beginning of November he was for a while incapacitated for active exertion by an attack of illness, but he presently shook it off; and, having made himself master of Dover, Canterbury, and the rest of Kent, at the beginning of December he reached Southwark, and summoned the citizens of London to acknowledge him as king. They refused, and prepared for resistance; and an irresistible proof of the magnitude and strength of the city, even in that early age, is afforded by the fact, that even at the head of his victorious army he could not venture to attack it. He turned aside up the right bank of the Thames till he reached Wallingford in Berkshire, where it seems was the only bridge across the great river between the capital and Oxford; and thence, pressing on through parts of Oxford, Buckinghamshire, and Hertfordshire, he ravaged and desolated the country on his line of march, in order, by an union of alarm and scarcity to subdue the minds of the citizens. His policy succeeded. The experience which two months' acquaintance had given them of the weakness of their new king's character, had shown them that resistance to the victorious invader was impossible. Edgar himself was willing, if not desirous, to resign a crown which he had not sought. And in the middle of December he himself, with both the archbishops, repaired to Berkhamstead, where William then was, to submit to his pleasure and offer him the kingdom. On Christmas day, William was crowned in Westminster Abbey, and once more a foreign Conqueror* was acknowledged as sovereign of England.†

* The term Conqueror, however, in this instance, was not originally intended to bear its ordinary meaning. It was a translation of the barbarous Latin word *Conquestor*, which signifies not a victor, but one who has acquired a possession by some other means than that of lineal descent; as "by the present law language of Scotland, *conquest* is opposed to *heritage*."—See Millar's *Historical View of the English Government*, II. 9.

† Contemporaneous with some of the events mentioned in this chapter, are the reigns of Henry the Fowler and Otho the Great, in Germany. In 955, Otho finally defeated the Hungarians, who threatened to overrun all Europe; and in 964, united Italy to the German empire. In France, in 987, Hugh Capet, the ancestor of the Bourbon family, was raised to the throne.

CHAPTER V.

WILLIAM I.

A.D.
1066
1067.

THE conquest of England cannot be reckoned an unfortunate event for the country : the people had made no advance in any respect since the days of Alfred ; and, with nations as with individuals, not to improve is to become worse. They were still brave, but no additional tincture of literature, civilization, or humanity, had softened their ferocity ; experience and reflection had not taught them the blessings of settled government, while the habit of submitting to foreign invaders, to rulers not only of different families but of different nations, had broken down every feeling of loyalty, and with it all ideas of faithful or steady adherence to any engagement, or to any friendship. The clergy were infected with the universal degeneracy ; Dunstan had been an unscrupulous zealot for the advancement of his order, a bigoted and pitiless enforcer of his own ideas and principles ; still he was a man of genius himself, and an encourager of learning in others ; austere in his own practice, indifferent to riches, inaccessible to corruption ; and the inferior clergy, as was natural, had imitated in some degree the virtues of their chief. But, in the vicissitudes of the last hundred years ecclesiastical discipline had become greatly relaxed, and the clergy had preserved little more than the vices of their predecessors ; they were still bigoted and unscrupulous, though there were, of course, exceptions, of which Stigand, the present primate, a man of incorruptible virtue and patriotism, was the most conspicuous ; but in general they were no longer austere, nor even moral ; much less incorruptible or indifferent to riches ; study and every kind of industry had given place to sloth and sensuality, so that learning was almost extinct among them, and instead of being the instructors they had become the corrupters of the laity.

Very different was the state of the Normans : among no people had more rapid, or more constant advances been made in every thing that can contribute to the refinement and elevation of a people. It was only in the time of Athelstan, but little more than 100 years before, that Rollo had obtained from the feebleness of Charles the Simple the large district which, from the name of his followers, was thenceforth called Normandy ; and Rollo was a

pirate, up to that time recognizing no other standard of excellence than fearlessness, strength, and dexterity in arms; but his change of situation taught him new principles of action, and when he and his people became possessed of a home and of a country, he showed himself by the prudence of his conduct, and the equity of his legislation, worthy of the success which he had won by his intrepidity and energy. All his successors were able princes; and when Robert, the fifth in order, bequeathed his duchy to his natural son William, he left him the government of a people distinguished above all others of that time for liberality, good faith, and honesty; for the domestic virtues, for their zeal for literature and religion; while their love of glory, still as strong as when it prompted Hasting to invade Italy, or Rollo to refuse what he considered a degrading act of homage to the king of France, though so rich a prize as his promised duchy was to be the reward of his compliance, prevented their military character from degenerating. With these natural and acquired high qualities, they were henceforth to be joined with a race which had shown in the time of Alfred and Athelstan that they contained in themselves many of the elements of greatness, if they had but a governor capable of directing them; and the union of Norman energy with Saxon resolution, of the vivacity of intellect of the one people with the steadiness and practical sense of the other, has produced that desirable combination of qualities which has raised the united nation to a height of prosperity and happiness, both public and private, of which the world has afforded no similar example.

At Christmas, as has been already mentioned, William was crowned with all due solemnity at Westminster, but the ceremony was interrupted by an event which to superstitious minds seemed full of evil omen for the happiness of a reign which had such a disastrous commencement. A strong bodyguard of Norman troops surrounded the abbey, and when the archbishop put the question to the English and Norman nobles assembled, whether they would have William for their king, they raised such a shout of assent that the soldiers fancied that the English were making an attack on their new sovereign: in their alarm they fell on the populace and set fire to the adjacent houses. The tumult was appeased; but it was not so easy to allay the suspicion, however unfounded and irrational, that William himself had authorized that outbreak of his countrymen, or, at least, that they would not have ventured on it had they not felt sure that violence towards the natives was not an offence likely to be visited by him with any great severity of displeasure.

It was not easy for William to reconcile his promises of grace to his new subjects with those of reward which he had held out

to those by whose aid he had conquered them; the treasures of Harold, though he distributed them with a lavish hand, were insufficient for the purpose, and he was compelled to confiscate the possessions of those who had fought against him at Hastings. But, with this exception, his conduct at first was mild and equitable; he enforced order among his troops, and prohibited all rapine and violence; he regulated the taxes with moderation, encouraged commerce, promoted marriages between the English and Normans, and gave his own niece Judith in marriage to one of the most powerful of the English nobles, Waltheof, the son of Siward. So zealous, indeed, was he to arrive at a real understanding of, and to show that he had a princely regard for, the interests of his new subjects, that he even applied himself diligently to learn their language, and caused his youngest son Henry, who had been born since his establishment in England, to be carefully instructed in it. At the same time, while he thus sought to win the affections of the nation, he took precautions against any revolt on their part; building fortresses in different parts of the kingdom, and placing Norman garrisons in them to overawe the adjacent districts into tranquillity.

Undoubtedly the first motive which dictated William's measures was a resolution to maintain and extend his personal authority, and that of the crown which he had won. It was with this object that he established throughout the whole kingdom the feudal system,* some parts of which had indeed been introduced during the late reign; and modified it by one most important innovation, that of making the tenants of the crown vassals swear fealty to himself, as well as to their immediate lord—a regulation calculated to prevent any noble from rendering himself independent. But he was also sagacious enough to feel that the best bulwark of his throne must be the cheerful obedience, the affection of his new subjects; and his original intention manifestly was to preserve the principal part of the existing laws and customs, in order to induce them the more willingly to acquiesce in his incorporation with them of those other laws and customs to which we have alluded. It seemed at first likely that this policy of conciliation

* Mr. Stubbs, however, (*Chronicle of Henry II.*, vol. II., p. lii.) looks upon William not as having superseded and destroyed the former constitution, but "simply" as having "dovetailed a feudal superstructure into the fundamental framework of the Anglo Saxon polity."

Every remark of Mr. Stubbs is worthy of the most careful attention, as are the arguments with which he follows up this observation, "that there was nothing radically inconsistent in the two systems," &c. &c. But he admits afterwards that "the principle of allodial tenure" (the very foundation of the Anglo Saxon system) "was to be extinguished." . . . "The feudal tenure was to be universally enforced." And this can hardly have been a dovetailing of the two systems; though it is, no doubt, true that the old inhabitants, especially after the death of Rufus, enjoyed more freedom than was the lot of the middle and lower classes in other countries where the feudal system prevailed.

would be successful; and it is probable that if he had remained among them in England till the people were in some degree habituated to submission, it might have proved so; but unfortunately he had left behind him in Normandy matters which required to be settled by a firm hand; and he presumed so much on the efficacy of the measures which he had adopted here, and in the spirit of obedience and content which, as he flattered himself, already prevailed among his new subjects, that in the spring of 1067, he ventured to return to Normandy; and the officers whom he appointed to govern England in his absence, his half-brother Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and Fitzosborne, one of his most renowned knights, were less able, or less inclined to repress the turbulence of the soldiers, who began to treat the natives with great insolence. The English were not yet sufficiently humbled to endure injustice with patience, or injury without retaliation; discontent soon ripened into rebellion, and as William had taken in his train the most powerful of their nobles (thinking that they would thus be in a manner hostages for the peaceful behaviour of their countrymen), the rebellious spirit only produced a disorderly rising without concert, and without vigour, inadequate to shake William's power in the smallest degree, but sufficient to exasperate him against the whole people as disaffected and treacherous. The news of the outbreak brought him back without delay from Normandy, and his mere presence in the island was sufficient to quell the revolt; but the fact of its having been so easily excited sunk deep into his mind, and, recollecting that the mild and paternal government of Canute had been followed after his death by the extinction of the Danish power, he resolved to avoid a similar result as far as the avoidance of a similar line of conduct could ensure his doing so, and began to treat the whole nation, as conquered and hostile, with relentless severity. The landowners were dispossessed of their estates; all who had been invested with any honourable offices were deprived of them; even the bishops and abbots of English birth were expelled and replaced by foreign ecclesiastics; and, in order to prevent nocturnal meetings for future conspiracies, an ancient regulation was revived which had been common in England under her ancient Saxon kings; and which, under the name of the curfew* prevailed among the feudal nations of the continent,—bells were ordered to be tolled in every town at eight o'clock in the evening, after which no one, on any pretence, was allowed to have a fire or light within his dwelling.

These oppressive measures produced fresh rebellions: nor did the unhappy English trust to their own unassisted resources for success. The sons of Harold, who had taken refuge in Ireland,

* Curfew, from *courrefeu*.

made an ineffectual attempt with an Irish army on the coast of Devonshire. A more formidable aid came from the Baltic, landed near the Humber amid the acclamations of the people, and met with great temporary success, taking York, destroying some of the garrisons which William had stationed in that district, and a second time crowning Edgar king of England. William hastened in person to the scene of danger, bribed the Danes to depart, stormed York, and prepared to take inhuman vengeance on the inhabitants of the revolted province. That the Danes might no longer have allies ready to receive them in that part of the island which lay the nearest to their fleets, he determined to lay the whole district waste, exterminating the inhabitants, destroying farmhouses and towns, and driving off the cattle. For nearly a hundred miles in every direction he depopulated the whole country so completely, that a century afterwards it presented to the eye of a chronicler, who records the fact, nothing but a barren and empty desert, the refuge of foxes and vermin, destitute of men, of crops, and of habitations. Above 100,000 persons perished in this inhuman massacre and devastation, which inflicted a severe blow on the prosperity and opulence of the whole island; and has left a stain on William's character which no success and no triumph can efface.

Such inhuman oppression could only provoke fresh rebellion: but every insurrection was speedily put down by the sleepless vigilance of the Conqueror. One rising was even attempted by some of the most distinguished of the Norman barons, whom William had begun to treat with an arbitrary tyranny, to which they were wholly unused, and totally disinclined to submit: and they entangled in it earl Waltheof, who incautiously revealed it to his wife, the niece of William. She betrayed her husband to her uncle; and the conspiracy, which had been more carefully matured than any previous design against the government, brought only ruin to the conspirators. The chief Normans who had been concerned in it, even Roger, the heir of William's favourite, Fitzosborne, were confined in dungeons for life; and Waltheof, the last of the English barons who had been allowed to retain power or consideration, fell by the hand of the executioner.

A.D. 1074. No event that had occurred during the whole reign broke the spirit of the English like his death. They put on mourning for him as for one of royal blood, worshipped him as a saint, and fondly believed that miracles were worked at his tomb.

William, who would not spare the man to whom he had given his own niece, was not likely to be more merciful towards those who could claim no connexion with him; and the confiscation of the estates of all of English blood went on so unsparingly, that

before the end of his reign there was scarcely one property left in the hands which had possessed it only twenty years before. One English bishop, Wulfstan of Worcester, was allowed to retain his rank till his death : his loyalty could not save him from the effects of the hatred that William had now learnt to entertain towards all his race, though he had borne arms on the king's side in the most formidable insurrection that had broken out ; but superstition procured him that mercy which his services were unable to obtain. He was cited before a council held in Westminster Abbey, and deposed, by a formal sentence, for the crime of being unable to speak French. His spirit rose against his oppressors. "It belonged not to them," he told them, "to deprive him of a dignity which had been conferred on him by the sainted Edward : to him alone would he surrender the office which he had received from him." Then, striding across the abbey to the Confessor's tomb, he stuck his pastoral staff into the solid stone so firmly, that, if we may believe the monks who record the transaction, no one present, save Wulfstan himself, could draw it out again. The council recognized the will of God in the miracle, and Wulfstan was left in possession of the rank thus solemnly confirmed to him.

The north of England had been devastated out of pitiless revenge. A large tract in the south, still called the New Forest, was laid waste in a similar manner, out of pure wantonness, to supply the king with a hunting ground of sufficient extent near the palace, which was his usual residence, at Winchester. And, in addition to this needless cruelty, severe game laws were enacted, prohibiting the slaughter of any animals considered beasts of chase under penalties as severe as those which protected the life of a man, "for the king," says an old chronicler, "loved the great game as if he had been their father."

So firmly had he established his authority that he was able to enforce the subjection of the Church to the civil power, and to defy the mandates of the pope, though Gregory the Seventh, who at this time governed the papal see, was the most ambitious of men, had extended the papal authority to a degree that the most domineering of his predecessors never contemplated, and had a zealous and able coadjutor in Lanfranc, a Milanese monk, who, on the deposition of Stigand, had been made archbishop of Canterbury. But the imperious haughtiness of the one, and the supple craft of the other, were alike powerless to move the iron will of the Conqueror. He permitted, indeed, the contribution called Peter's pence, originally granted, out of their private estates alone, by the Saxon monarchs, for the support of an English College at Rome, to be still sent to Rome : but in reply to Gregory's demand, that he should do him

homage for the kingdom as a gift which the papal bull had conferred on him, he openly asserted his independence of the papal authority. In defiance of the claims to exemption which the Church was beginning to put forth, he compelled the principal ecclesiastics to bear their full share of the burdens requisite for the defence of the kingdom, and to furnish knights and soldiers in proportion to the extent of the lands held by them; he punished any disobedience on their part by fine and imprisonment by his own authority, and refused the English prelates permission to attend a general council which the pope summoned to decide on measures to be adopted against his enemies.

William was less happy in his private, than he was prosperous in his public life. He lost one son by an accident, and the three who remained filled his court with their quarrels. Robert, the eldest, was a prince of great bravery, but of a rash and imperious temper, disdaining to submit to control even from his father; and he was jealous of his younger brothers, William and Henry, who, as being more submissive to the king's will, enjoyed more of his favour. Before his invasion of England, William had promised, if he succeeded in his enterprise, to make over Normandy to his son; but when pressed to fulfil his promise, he refused to do so; declaring, to use his own language, that he did not mean to take off his clothes till he went to bed. This disappointment, added to the slights that he fancied he received from his brothers, drove the prince into open rebellion; and William, who had been for some time in Normandy, was forced to take arms against him. The king was besieging his son in the castle of Gerberoy, on the frontier of the duchy, and Robert, on one occasion heading a vigorous sally of the garrison, engaged an unknown knight in single combat; he wounded him slightly, and killed his horse, when the voice of the fallen warrior calling for another charger, revealed to him that the enemy who had so nearly fallen by his hand was his own father. Struck by remorse, he threw himself at his feet, and implored his pardon; and this incident led to a reconciliation between them.

The king of France had countenanced Robert's rebellion, and after his restoration to favour had encouraged some of his barons to make inroads on the Norman frontier. William determined to avenge this insult by war, and while his preparations were delayed by a fit of illness, he was still further exasperated by a sarcasm which was repeated to him. He had grown very stout, and Philip hearing that he was still confined to his bed, expressed his wonder that the king of England should be as long lying in as a woman. William sent him word, that as soon as he was up, he would make an offering of more lights at Notre Dame than he would like to

see.* The performance of his threat was fatal to him; for while riding round the ruins of the town of Mante, which his soldiers had burnt by his orders, his horse, stepping on some hot ashes, plunged so violently as in some way or other to injure him internally, and a few days afterwards he died, in the sixty-third year of his age, having been king of England nearly twenty-one years.

We have more accurate information with respect to the state of the land, and the general income of the kingdom during William's A.D. 1087. reign, than we can obtain of that of any other nation in those ages, from the celebrated Domesday Book which he caused to be compiled, and which was in effect a register of all the properties and landowners throughout the whole kingdom, except a portion of the province of York. But of the population we have no such certain knowledge. It is generally estimated that it amounted to something more than a million and a half of persons at the time of the conquest; and a quarter of a million of foreigners are believed to have become settlers in the land during the twenty years that followed that event. But the numbers of those who fell in resisting the first invasion, and in the subsequent repeated rebellions, must have been very great; and when we take into consideration also, the fearful extermination of the inhabitants of the northern districts, and of the New Forest, we must suppose that the diminution of the population from these causes must have fully counterbalanced the addition made to it by the immigration of the foreign settlers; so that it seems probable that it cannot at any time in this reign have exceeded the number mentioned above, of something more than a million and a half of souls.

The character of William may be easily appreciated even from the brief sketch here given of his reign. Full of ambition, yet never tempted by it to enterprises beyond his power; as a warrior, he was brave and skilful; as a ruler, he was vigilant, politic, and far-sighted. On the other hand, he was arbitrary, revengeful, and merciless; sparing not only no enemy to his power, but no obstacle to his pleasure or caprice. He had an abstract love of justice and order, but trampled on both without scruple and without remorse whenever the doing so appeared in the least calculated to strengthen his authority. The best eulogy of his practical wisdom and statesmanship is to be found in the fact, that at a time when legitimate sovereigns so often failed to transmit their hereditary dominions to their children, he was able to leave a foreign kingdom which he had acquired by conquest to his; having laid the foundations of his power so surely, that at a distance of nearly eight hundred years his descendant still sits on the throne won by the sword of her ancestor.

* It was the custom for women, after their confinement, to offer lighted candles on the altar.

CHAPTER VI.

WILLIAM II., SURNAMED RUFUS.

A.D.
1067
1100.

THE Conqueror on his death bed bequeathed Normandy to Robert, and England to his second son, William, surnamed Rufus, or the Red, from the colour of his hair; but William, who suspected that this injustice to his elder brother would not be popular with those on whom Robert's open and liberal, though incautious and indolent disposition had made a favourable impression, did not trust to his father's bequest for his success so much as to the celerity of his own measures. He had scarcely obtained possession of the letter in which Lanfranc was desired to crown him king of England, and his father was not yet actually dead, when he quitted Normandy, and, crossing the Channel, seized Dover and some other fortresses, and, what were of not less use, his father's treasures. The moment that the news of the Conqueror's death arrived Lanfranc complied with his dying injunction, and crowned Rufus as his successor. But the Norman barons, with the Conqueror's half-brothers, Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and Robert, earl of Montaigne, at their head, prepared to resist him, and organized a conspiracy to place Robert on the throne. William's operations, however, were as prompt to secure as they had been to obtain the crown; he won the favour of the English by fair promises, which however he forgot to keep when success had made him indifferent to their support, besieged and stormed the strongholds which his opponents had seized, posted a formidable fleet on the coast to prevent any succour arriving from Normandy, and by these vigorous measures soon reduced all his enemies to submission, and Robert himself agreed to accept a pension of 5000*l.* a year to surrender his claims on the kingdom. But though Robert was thus easily satisfied, William was not; and, as his brother's indolence soon produced great disorders in Normandy, he invaded that duchy in the hope of reuniting it to England: at last, however, these disgraceful quarrels between brothers were terminated by a compromise, in which it was provided that each should retain his possessions for his life; but, that in the case of either dying without legitimate issue, the survivor should inherit his dominions.

The Conqueror had, however, left a third son, Henry, born after

his conquest of England, to whom he had only bequeathed a large sum of money, but whom Robert had put in possession of a portion of Normandy; he was discontented at the terms of the reconciliation to which his brothers had agreed, foreseeing that, if in consequence of it William should become the ruler of Normandy, he would certainly not allow him to retain the district which Robert had given him: he retired to St. Michael's Mount, a strong fortress on the coast, and infested the neighbourhood by predatory incursions to such a degree, that both his brothers were forced to lay siege to it; and an anecdote is preserved of them, while occupied in this blockade, which marks the difference of their characters. The garrison was in great distress for want of water; so much so that Henry himself applied to them to relieve it: Robert not only facilitated his procuring it, but sent him several pipes of choice wine for his own table; and when William reproached him for the ignorance of military usages which such an act displayed, urging that nothing would have so surely compelled the fortress to a speedy surrender as thirst, "How," said the kind-hearted duke, "could we let our brother die of thirst: where could we have found another if we had lost him?" Henry was soon compelled to submit; and, as William was able to prevent Robert from showing him any active kindness, he was for some time in great distress; but the reconciliation between the two elder brothers was so complete, that in a war with Scotland, which took place shortly afterwards, Robert commanded the English army, defeated Malcolm Canmore, the king, and compelled him to do homage to the crown of England.

William's temper was too rapacious to allow him to adhere contentedly to his agreement, and after a time he began to renew his designs on Normandy; labouring to detach the king of France from his alliance with Robert, and tampering with the Norman barons, whom Robert's want of firmness encouraged in every kind of factious disorder; when an opportunity presented itself of obtaining the object of his wishes in an easier and less openly dishonourable manner. Peter the Hermit was just stirring up Europe to the first crusade, and in every country princes and nobles were levying troops, and availing themselves of every imaginable expedient to raise money for such a distant and protracted expedition. No one embraced the enterprise more warmly than the duke of Normandy, and, as his treasury was exhausted, he offered to mortgage his duchy to the king of England for 10,000 marks; and William eagerly accepted the offer, though his exchequer also was sunk so low that it was only by levying a heavy contribution upon the whole nation, compelling even the convents to melt down their plate, that he was able to raise the sum required. ..

Towards the latter part of his reign he had a violent quarrel with the Church. He was as munificent as his brother Robert; and, as his liberality outstripped his proper funds, he kept the richest ecclesiastical benefices vacant, and seized on their revenues; and when he did fill them up, it was often only because he had sold them to the highest bidder. On the death of Lanfranc he was some years before he appointed a successor to the archbishopric. At last he conferred it upon Anselm, a Norman abbot, and a man of virtue and learning, but possessed of none of that worldly wisdom and tact which could alone have enabled him to continue in harmony with so haughty and headstrong a sovereign. There were many things, for the reform of which William would have seen the necessity, for he was a judicious and energetic ruler; many, probably, in which, though not himself disapproving of them, he would have permitted alteration, for he was in many respects a generous and magnanimous prince; but the matters which Anselm chose to select for his animadversion were so trivial, that dictation in them could only provoke the contempt of any man of sense; while yet, such is the wayward character of the human mind, it was more annoying, and more likely to provoke resistance than interference in more weighty affairs. It was beginning to be the fashion to wear the hair long, falling on the shoulders; this the archbishop pronounced to be a contempt of St. Paul, who had taught, that "if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him." Another fashion had lately introduced shoes with such preposterously long-pointed toes, that they were turned upwards, and often fastened by gold or silver chains to the knee; this was declared to be a violation of the positive command of Scripture, not to try and add a cubit to one's stature;* and the archbishop refused the episcopal benediction to those who would not cut their hair and shorten the toes of their shoes. The courtiers consented to cut their hair, but were firm in refusing to give up the peaks of their shoes. The conscientious prelate would admit of no compromise; and his secretary, who has recorded his history, praises him for scarcely any action of his life more than for his rigid adherence to his principles in this instance.

There were, however, also weightier matters of dispute between the king and the archbishop. There were at this time two claimants of the papal dignity, Clement and Urban; and Anselm wished to receive his confirmation as archbishop from the latter, whom William refused to consider as the true pope. This dispute had hardly been terminated by Urban's conciliating the king so as to

* Not that there is any such command; the words of Scripture are, "Which of you by making thought can add one cubit to his stature?"

induce him to acknowledge him, when he was again provoked by the insufficiency of the equipments of the troops which Anselm, in compliance with the Conqueror's regulations, furnished towards an expedition with which William was preparing to invade Wales. Anselm resolved to go in person to the pope to request his decision. The king threatened that if he quitted the kingdom he would confiscate all his revenues as archbishop; and both parties kept their words. Urban tried in vain to reconcile William to his obstinate subject; and Anselm continued abroad till the monarch's death, which took place about three years afterwards.

The English looked upon his death as a judgment for the sins of his father. The Conqueror had committed no more cruel act of tyranny than that which has been mentioned, of laying waste the country between Salisbury and the sea to make the New Forest. He had scarcely completed the devastation, when his own son Richard met his death in that very forest by a wound inflicted by a stag. In the spring of the year 1100, duke Robert's son was killed, in the same place, by a chance shot from an arrow. On the 2nd of August, in the same year, William held a great hunting feast at Winchester; and in the afternoon went forth with many of his most honoured knights, and among them a French baron, named Walter Tyrrel, whom he regarded with especial favour, to hunt in the same forest. An arrow of Tyrrel's, aimed at a passing stag, glancing from one of the numerous oaks that adorn those beautiful glades (tradition long pointed out the particular tree, and a stone pillar still marks the spot where it stood), pierced the king's breast, who fell dead without uttering a word. His age is not exactly known; but he was about forty years old, and had reigned not quite thirteen.

CHAPTER VII.

HENRY I.

A.D.
1109
1135



WILLIAM died unmarried; and, according to the agreement entered into between Robert and himself, which had been solemnly confirmed by both the English and Norman barons, the duke of Normandy had now an incontestable right to the throne. But prince Henry, who made one of the fatal hunting party, recollecting how William

by his promptitude had formerly secured it, now emulated his rapidity of decision and action, hastened to Winchester, where he secured the royal treasures; and, proceeding to London, by his promises and his presents, gained over the prelates and barons who were in that city to elect him king; and, on the third day after his brother's death, he was solemnly crowned by the bishop of London.

His chief partisans at first were the clergy. But the English also favoured his accession because he had been born in England, and was, therefore, they flattered themselves, less likely to look upon them as foreigners than his elder brother; and this partiality of theirs towards him was greatly increased by his recollection of Anselm, who now acted a wiser part than he had chosen under Rufus, upholding the rights of the natives, and, what was almost of equal importance in the eyes of a superstitious people, vindicating the honour of the national saints. A still greater gratification to them, and one from which they expected to derive still greater benefits, was Henry's marriage with Edith, the daughter of the king of Scotland, and of Edgar Atheling's sister. The Norman barons opposed this marriage most vehemently. They looked upon it as a degradation of their blood that their sovereign should ally himself with one who, though a princess, belonged to a nation which they had conquered, and which they were incessantly oppressing and trampling on. It was to no purpose that in deference to their prejudices her Saxon name of Edith was changed to Matilda. They sought to prevent the match by declaring that she had already been professed as a nun: but it was proved that, though she had been the inmate of a convent, and had occasionally worn a veil, it had been only with the design of protecting her honour from the ruffianism of the Norman soldiery; and Anselm, with the unanimous consent of an assembly of bishops to whom the matter was referred, pronounced that she had never been a nun, but that she was free to marry according to her own pleasure. To the end of her life the English believed that she was constant in her efforts to render her husband's heart and government favourable towards them, so that her epitaph records that by them she was called Maude the Good Queen. If we must place implicit confidence in the chroniclers of this reign, it does not appear that they derived any great benefit from her exertions, for we are told that they were exposed, not only to the same oppression and insult as under the two preceding sovereigns, but also to previously unheard of and newly devised afflictions; so that the husbandmen, unable any longer to bear the lawless cruelty of the barons, and the authorized exactions of the tax-gatherers, threw down their ploughshares at the king's feet, to intimate that they had relin-

quished the cultivation of their native soil. All were not thus patient. Ever since the battle of Hastings there had been many bold men who, disdaining to acquiesce in the spoliation of their property, or to submit to a master on the lands of which they at one time had been the undisputed lords, had taken refuge in the woods, and from those fastnesses had maintained a constant warfare against the usurping foreigners, not encountering them in numerous hosts, but falling upon them when found alone or in small parties, sometimes even storming a castle that chanced to be slightly defended, living on the booty they thus acquired, and, what was a still greater offence, on the deer that roved through the forests. Such men, in the succeeding generation, were Robin Hood and his followers, long celebrated in the national ballads as the enemies of the oppressors, and the champions of the oppressed, and since immortalized in one of the most brilliant tales of the mighty genius of our own age : but in the haughty style of the oppressors themselves they were called robbers and assassins ; nor was it unnatural that when taken with arms in their hands, they should meet with little mercy from those to whom they would themselves have shown as little. But it is mentioned as an extraordinary piece of tyranny on the part of Henry, that on one occasion he permitted his chief justice, Raoul Basset, to seize fifty men, and put nearly all of them to death, and deprive the rest of their eyes, on the mere suspicion, which was undeserved by most of them, that they belonged to these bands of marauders. Still, whatever it may occasionally be in the case of an individual, it is so little the habit of a nation to feel deep gratitude for a good will that produces no solid fruit, that we may probably conceive with reason that the exertions of the Good Queen were not altogether unsuccessful ; but that her influence over her husband did really tend to lighten the distresses and ameliorate the condition of those whom she acknowledged as her countrymen.

And it is not inconsistent with what we know of Henry's own character, to believe that this was likely to be the case. Though not destitute of the stern stuff which ambition had implanted in the breasts of his father and his brother William, it was softened in him by a degree of refinement and learning in which they had no share, and which, to that unlettered age, appeared so marvellous as to spread his renown over Europe, and to earn him, in his own land, the honourable surname of Beauclerc. To an intellect so cultivated the uniform maintenance of law and justice appeared worthy to be the primary object of his care ; and as (whatever crimes may have been occasionally committed by the oppressed natives) the chief violators of both were the Norman barons, he applied all his energies to bridle their presumption, compelling

them to answer in his courts for acts of violence and oppression; inflicting heavy fines on some, and banishing others more guilty or more obstinate from his dominions altogether; while he sought to counterbalance the power of those who remained, by ennobling some of the more distinguished members of the lower classes, and raising them by a well-judged munificence to a rank in which their submission to law and authority, on which he thought he could with reason depend, would not only serve as an example to many, but would enable him the more easily to coerce those who continued to be refractory.

It would have been well for his fame if he had observed the same spirit of moderation and equity towards his brother Robert that guided him in his dealings with others. When Rufus died, Robert was in the Holy Land, leading his troops in the first crusade with such renown, that, when the Holy Sepulchre was won, the assembled chieftains unanimously offered him the kingdom of Jerusalem; and it was only on his refusal of the proffered dignity that it was conferred on Godfrey de Bouillon. On hearing of his brother's death he hastened home to assert his claim to the English throne, relying not only on the rights of primogeniture, but also on the express agreement which he had made with Rufus, and which had been formally ratified by the English and Norman barons. He took possession of Normandy without opposition, as the death of William was admitted to have established his right over that country, and then prepared to invade England, where he had a strong party among the barons, who were influenced not only by the renown which he had gained in the Holy Land, but also by their unwillingness to endure the separation of the two countries. He landed at Portsmouth at the head of a considerable force, but his ambition was of too vacillating a character for him to persevere steadily in any enterprise, however promising, and he listened to pacific overtures from Henry, which resulted in his waiving all his claims for an annuity of three thousand marks, and returning to Normandy.

But if he had learnt how to conquer kingdoms, he had not discovered how to govern them better than he did before; under his feeble sway, Normandy again became the scene of rapine and bloodshed, and their inevitable concomitants, desolation and misery, till the nobles and clergy almost unanimously implored Henry to come to their aid, and rescue the land, which his forefathers had governed with such glory, from the degradation and distress into which the misrule and incapacity of his brother had plunged both it and them. Besides the natural affection which ought to bind brothers, Henry was under great personal obligations to Robert; it was Robert's kindness which, as has been mentioned before, had

saved him from experiencing the full weight of William's relentless animosity ; for a very inadequate sum he had surrendered to him his right to the English throne ; and he had recently, though never rich, made his queen the munificent present of a year's payment of the annuity due to him for that surrender. But these considerations did not for a moment counterbalance, in the cold politic heart of Henry, the chance of obtaining so important an acquisition of territory as now seemed to be placed within his grasp. He invaded Normandy, defeated him, took him prisoner at Tenchebray, and annexed his duchy to his own kingdom. Edgar Atheling was serving in Robert's army, and fell into Henry's hands at the same time. Him he treated with contempt, which seems to have been the only feeling Edgar ever excited in the breast of even his most unscrupulous and vindictive rivals, and allowed him to live at large on a small pension : but Robert he kept in confinement in Cardiff Castle for twenty-eight years, till death brought him that deliverance which it was vain for him to expect from his brother. Most historians have recorded that, having on one occasion endeavoured to escape, his eyes were put out by Henry's order, and that the misery of torture and blindness was added to the deprivation of his liberty ; but this story appears to have been unknown to his contemporaries, and rather to have been an invention of later times, and we may reasonably hope, that the king's memory does not deserve the imputation of a crime of such atrocious and needless cruelty. Robert had a son named William, who was long protected by the French king, who gave him the earldom of Flanders, and who encouraged more than one conspiracy among the Norman barons, both in Normandy and England, which had for its object his restoration to the power of which his father had been so unjustly deprived. But William died in early manhood of a wound, and Henry had nothing to fear from any other competitor.

Henry had many natural children, but by his wife Matilda he had only one son, and one daughter named also Matilda, and married first to the emperor of Germany, and after his death, to Geoffrey Plantagenet, earl of Anjou. It was on his son that all his affections were fixed ; but the hopes which he had formed were not destined to be realized. He had been in Normandy settling the affairs of that duchy, which his genius soon restored to order and prosperity, and was returning with the Prince, when a Norman of the name of Fitzstephen, the son of the man who had steered the Conqueror when he sailed to the conquest of England, begged to be allowed now to convey the Conqueror's son across the same Channel. Henry had already chosen a ship for his own passage, but allowed the prince, some others of his natural children, and a

vast number of young nobles who had followed in his train, to go in Fitzstephen's ship. Fifty chosen rowers were the crew of the vessel, but unfortunately the young prince treated them to wine so abundantly as in some degree to deprive them of their accustomed caution and skill. They ran the vessel on the rocks, and every soul on board her was lost, except a butcher who clung to the mast till daylight, and from whom the circumstances of the calamity were learnt.

The bereaved monarch's grief was terrible. He landed in safety, expecting to be speedily followed by his son. When he did not appear his anxiety became uncontrollable, and, as the time wore away, his agony was so great, that when the news of the disaster arrived, none of his counsellors or friends dared to communicate it to him. At last they sent in a little boy to tell him what had happened, and the certainty of his loss seemed for a while to have overpowered his faculties. He did not weep, but lay motionless; neither eating, nor sleeping, nor taking notice of any one. He appeared to have abandoned himself to despair. After a while the remonstrances of some faithful friends roused him from the state of utter insensibility in which he lay, and he resumed his attention to his ordinary occupations, but to the hour of his death no smile was ever again seen upon his countenance. The Normans lamented the virtues and talents of the young prince whom they had lost; but the English chroniclers exulted in his death as a more determined enemy of their race than any of his ancestors; according to their account, his little finger would have been heavier on them than his father's loins; he had threatened to yoke them like oxen to the plough, and they looked upon the singular circumstances of his shipwreck in perfectly calm weather, as a manifest judgment of God upon the race that so mercilessly oppressed them.

Henry had been some years a widower; and, now that he had lost his son, being anxious for male posterity to inherit his crown, since his only remaining legitimate child was a daughter, while there was as yet no instance of a woman becoming the sovereign of an European kingdom, he married Adelais, the daughter of the duke of Lovaine, and niece of Calixtus, the reigning pope. But she brought him no children; and his daughter was also left a childless widow by the early death of her husband, the emperor of Germany. She returned to England, and Henry held a great court at Windsor Castle, where he persuaded all the Norman barons of both England and Normandy to acknowledge her for his successor; the very first baron to take the oath being Stephen, who, on Henry's death, was the very first to violate it. As we shall soon see, Matilda never did, in fact, enjoy the throne: but this formal recognition of her claims is not the less worthy of remark, since it

established in England the principle of female succession, which was as yet undecided in most countries.

Prince William before his death had been betrothed to the daughter of Fulk, count of Anjou, who was to have brought large estates to the crown of England as her dower. Unwilling to lose the advantages of this connexion, the king now gave the widowed Matilda to Fulk's son Geoffrey, surnamed Plantagenet, from his passion for hunting, and his habit of wearing a tuft of the genista or broom-plant in his hunting-cap. He knighted Geoffrey at Rouen with great pomp, and the marriage took place in the summer of 1127. For a time that union also appeared likely to be unproductive of results; but after six years Matilda gave birth to a son, named Henry, after his grandfather; and the king again summoned his barons, and compelled them to swear fealty to the infant, and to recognize him as the eventual successor to the throne after the death of himself and daughter. It was his last public act of which any record is preserved. Two years afterwards he died in Normandy of an indigestion, produced by eating too plentifully of lampreys, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign.

If we judge Henry the First by the standard of the time in which he lived, we must be of opinion that he has had few equals among princes. He had one great vice, an undue ambition, which led him into great crimes,—the usurpation of the kingdom of England, the expulsion of his brother from Normandy, and the keeping that brother in confinement, who, whatever his faults may have been towards others, had always treated him with kindness and liberality. But ambition is so nearly akin to many of the most imposing virtues, and has so often been the parent of great acts, that, when productive of fortunate results, it has commonly received a more lenient judgment from posterity than it strictly deserves. And when we reflect on the misery to which the misgovernment of Robert reduced Normandy, we must acknowledge that Henry's usurpation delivered that duchy, and saved England from great evils, and that it was fortunate for both countries that he was not endowed with too tender and scrupulous a conscience. In every other respect he seems deserving of unmixed praise. The English chroniclers indeed continued to lament the afflictions of their countrymen, the Norman barons were still fierce and rapacious, the Norman clergy more than ever dissolute and corrupt; still it is clear that the vigour with which he enforced justice must have greatly ameliorated the condition of the classes most exposed to oppression and injury, while the peace which he maintained throughout the greater part of his reign must have been favourable to the general prosperity of the kingdom. Though

personally valiant and skilful in war, he was no lover of it, but preferred peace and order; possessed himself of learning and accomplishments, not only unusual for a layman, but superior to that of most of the clergy in that age, he desired to cultivate in others the same attachment to the softer virtues which refine the character, and embellish society, that inspired himself. Nor can there be a greater praise for a monarch called to reign over a turbulent people in a lawless age, than to have been the first to endeavour to substitute the ascendancy of intellect for that of brute force, and to teach a nation or a class to submit to justice and reason, which had previously feared no power, and acknowledged no authority, but that of mighty warriors, or wide-governing and successful tyrants.

CHAPTER VIII.

STEPHEN.

A.D.
1135
1153.



WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR had left a daughter Adela, married to Stephen, earl of Blois, and her two youngest sons, Stephen and Henry, had come to England during the reign of the late king, who had loaded them both with favours, had conferred large estates on Stephen, the elder of the two, and the bishopric of Winchester on Henry. When he caused the barons to swear fealty to his daughter, Stephen, as we have seen, was the very first to take the oath, which he can never have intended to observe; for the moment that Henry had expired he quitted Normandy, whither he had gone in the king's train, and hastened to England to seize the kingdom. His noble qualities (for he seems to have had nearly every virtue except moderation), and his gracious affable manners, had gained him great popularity among all classes; and he made sure of finding a strong party ready to espouse his cause against the pretensions of a woman and an infant. He was not deceived. Dover and Canterbury, indeed, refused to admit him; but London received him with open arms, and saluted him as king: and William, who had succeeded Anselm as archbishop, made the stupid and improbable falsehood asserted by Hugh Bigod, the steward of the royal household, that Henry had in his last moments repented of his preference for his daughter, and had declared his intention to appoint Stephen his heir, an excuse for crowning him at Westminster.

A step more fatal to the tranquillity and prosperity of the kingdom could hardly have been taken; for Stephen was so destitute

of any right to the throne, and the claims of Matilda and her son were so incontestable, that it was plain from the beginning that the pretensions of such competitors could only be decided by war. Stephen behaved with great prudence and vigour, and omitted nothing which could conciliate the support of his new subjects. Henry, on his accession, had granted a charter calculated to remedy many of the evils complained of in the preceding reigns, and in imitation of him, Stephen now granted another, full of liberal promises to all classes ; and, not trusting solely to peaceful arts, he employed the late king's treasures in hiring large bodies of mercenary troops on the Continent, and in procuring from the pope a bull, acknowledging him as king of England, and threatening with excommunication every one who should resist him. The possession of Normandy followed that of England ; and Matilda would have been at once deprived of all the ample inheritance bequeathed to her by her father, if she had not found a protector and champion in her natural brother Robert, earl of Gloucester, who in her cause soon displayed the most eminent qualities of a warrior and a statesman.

The first person however to strike a blow for her was her uncle David King of Scotland. He collected a large army and invaded England, penetrating as far as Northallerton in Yorkshire. The Norman barons met in equal numbers to oppose him, and, to excite the English to serve willingly in their cause, they brought out of the Saxon churches the banners of the old Saxon saints, of St. Cuthbert, St. Wilfrid, and St. John of Beverley, uniting them all in a huge standard, from which the battle which ensued has taken its name. The clansmen of the highlands and of the isles made an imposing show ; but one aged chieftain, whose name was at a subsequent era immortalized by the heroic deeds of his descendant, Robert de Bruis, the lord of Annandale, urged their monarch to forbear to attack a nation which had powerfully assisted him in reducing his own unruly subjects to order. David disregarded his advice, and suffered his nephew to insult him for giving it. The aged warrior renounced his fealty to Scotland, and joined the English camp. The Scotch battalions rushed to the charge with the claymore : they were encountered with the terrible arrows of the English bowmen, which, in this fight, for the first time superseded the ancient battle-axe, and were chased to the Tyne, at that time the boundary of the two kingdoms.

The victory however, though important, did not give that stability to Stephen's throne that it would have done in the case of a sovereign with a better right to it ; for the defect of his title embroiled him with the barons, who availed themselves of the insecurity of his position to recover the privileges of which his

predecessor had deprived them ; and with the bishops, who envying them their power of plunder and oppression, sought to place themselves on a similar footing, building castles and fortresses, formidable alike to the lower classes and to the sovereign. Stephen was unable to subdue the barons ; but adopted resolute measures with the prelates, storming their castles, and imprisoning some of themselves : when, to his surprise, his own brother the bishop of Winchester, who had received a commission as the legate of the pope, took the part of his spiritual brethren, and compelled Stephen to abandon the hostile proceedings which he had begun to employ against them.

He could no longer afford to add to his enemies unnecessarily, for earl Robert had now completed his preparations and sent him a defiance, renouncing his allegiance to him, and requiring him to surrender his crown to his sister ; and to give effect to his words, Matilda herself landed in England with a gallant train of knights, and established her court at Arundel Castle. After long negotiations and several skirmishes of slight importance, Stephen was defeated, and taken prisoner on the banks of the Trent ; and Matilda

A. D. 1141. was acknowledged as queen, and crowned at Winchester. Unhappily she did not use her triumph with moderation ; but treated Stephen's partisans with such severity that his wife, whose name also was Matilda, was able to reassemble them in arms ; and in one of the battles which ensued she took earl Robert prisoner. Stephen was exchanged for Robert, and the war continued, till on the death of her brother, the empress-queen fled from England, and for a very brief period peace was restored to the kingdom.

1145. Normandy had followed the lead of England in submission to Stephen, and, on his capture, in acknowledging Matilda ; but now, when she was forced to retire from the island, he found that her party was so much strengthened in her continental dominions by the influence of her husband's family and the rising talents of her son Henry, that he could not again recover his footing in the duchy. And soon after his recovery of the kingdom, his partisans in England were greatly discouraged by the pope laying it under an interdict as a punishment for Stephen's refusal of permission to the English bishops to attend a council which he had summoned at Rheims. In that age of superstition and ignorance an interdict was the most dreaded weapon in the armoury of the see of Rome. Excommunication was confined to one, or at the most to a few individuals, and inflicted for their own real or imaginary errors ; but an interdict was levelled at a whole province, or nation, for offences in which it was not commonly alleged that the people themselves had any share ; while it lasted the churches were closed, no prayers were offered to God, the sacraments of the

Church were refused to the dying, the last offices of piety and humanity were withheld from the dead. It seems monstrous now that any pontiff should have had the impiety to issue such a sentence, or that any nation should have been so besotted as to submit to it; but men had not yet begun to subject the claims of the Church of Rome to the test of reason; the fetters in which the priesthood had bound the thoughts required a freer exercise of the mind to shake them off than the world was as yet capable of, and in the twelfth century there was no nation and no monarch so powerful or so bold as to venture wholly to brave her threats and to disregard her sentences.

A.D.
1148. When Henry arrived at the age of sixteen he repaired to Scotland to receive knighthood from his uncle, king David; and during his sojourn in that country he raised new hopes in the hearts of his English adherents by the valour and military skill which he displayed in inroads upon the English frontier, and by his general prudence and affability. Two years afterwards his mother made over to him the supreme power in Normandy. On the death of his father Geoffrey he became lord of Anjou and Maine, and in the year 1151, he added more largely to his dominions by his marriage with Eleanor, duchess of Guienne. She was many years older than himself, and had been divorced by Louis VII., king of France for her gallantries; but she was possessed of several of the richest provinces of France, and Henry overlooked every other consideration for the sake of the vast political advantages which such an union promised. Fortified by this great accession of power, and the additional influence which the possession of such considerable continental dominions gave him, he invaded England with a considerable army, and gained some trifling advantages over Stephen, but before any decisive action could take place, negotiations were set on foot, and it was agreed that Stephen should retain the sovereignty during his life, and that at his death Henry should succeed to the kingdom. That event took place the very next year. In October, 1154, Stephen died after a reign of nearly nineteen years,—years of great misery to England from the almost ceaseless civil wars to which his usurpation gave rise, though, had he been a lawful king, he was endowed with every quality calculated to have made his government popular, and with nearly every talent requisite to render it prosperous and beneficent.

CHAPTER IX.

HENRY II.

A.D.
1154
1189.



O monarch since Charlemagne had possessed such extensive territories as belonged to Henry the Second on his accession to the throne of England. His father, his mother, and his wife were all sovereigns of important states in the French territory, and he was the sole heir of their combined possessions; so that he was master of above a third of France; and when, as happened shortly afterwards, he had added Brittany to his dominions, he was lord of the entire northern and western coasts, from Picardy to the Pyrenees. In France he was more powerful than the king himself, and the abilities of his grandfather had extended the reputation of England upon the Continent; nor had the opinion of her power and importance been materially diminished by the miseries of the late civil wars. When he heard of Stephen's death he was in Normandy, engaged in military operations against one of his discontented barons; and so confident did he feel that his power in England was built on a sure foundation, that he did not depart to take possession of his new dominions till he had reduced his rebellious vassal to submission. His mother, who by her acquiescence in the treaty between him and Stephen had silently abandoned her prior claim on the kingdom, remained as governor in Normandy when he quitted that shore in December, 1154. He was received with acclamations in London, and was crowned with his queen at Westminster on the 19th of that month.

In his contest with the late king, Henry had given proofs of great energy and sagacity; and the state of the kingdom on his return to it loudly demanded the exercise of such qualities. Distress was general. The chief vice of the feudal system lay in its reducing the classes which, in countries where it did not prevail, though poor were free, to a state of serfdom, placing them almost wholly at the mercy of the nobles. And as Stephen, weak through his consciousness of a want of any legal title to the crown, could not venture to curb the arrogance of the barons with as strong a hand as his predecessor, they had oppressed those in their power with an insolent rapacity which in former reigns they had not dared equally to display. The whole land too was overrun with the foreign mercenaries whom Stephen himself had introduced. And all ranks, even the highest, were injured by the adulteration of the coinage which had

become universal. Multiform as the features of the distress were, they had one common origin, the weakness of the law, or, of what an ambitious and able prince like Henry looked on as synonymous with the law, the Royal authority. That, for his own sake, he was resolved to reestablish on a solid foundation : and it was his good fortune that he was able to make the line of conduct which he took for the safety of himself and his dynasty coincident with the interest of the nation at large. The majority of the barons were also personally hostile to himself, looking on him not so much as a Norman as an Angevin, and having throughout taken the part of Stephen against him ; so that their humiliation and depression seemed indispensable to, if not indeed identical with the establishment of justice, order, and security. His first measures therefore, were as popular as they were wise. He removed the foreign soldiers from the kingdom, restored authority to the laws, demolishing many of the baronial castles, appointing learned men as judges, and making frequent progresses, as they were called, through the different counties, to see that they administered the law without favour, partiality, or corruption. The administration of justice was indeed an object which he pursued with unceasing solicitude throughout his reign ; purifying and simplifying the existing code, and at the same time enriching it with so many new enactments, and establishing such sound principles of jurisprudence, that subsequent generations gave him the not undeserved title of the founder of the common law. He also took immediate steps to call in the bad money in circulation, and he issued a new coinage of the ancient and legal purity, thus removing at one sweep the causes of complaint that pressed most heavily on the people. He checked the Welsh, who were disposed to continue the incursions that the circumstances of the last reign had invited them to make on his frontiers, though in one battle among the mountains a portion of his army was defeated, and his whole force would have been routed if it had not been for his own personal exertions and military skill ; and thus in a very short time he repaired most of the evils of Stephen's usurpation.

A.D.
1185. He had been king nearly four years, when his brother Geoffrey died, who a little before his death had obtained possession of the county of Nantz by the election of the inhabitants. Henry now claimed Nantz as his brother's heir ; but Conan, duke of Brittany, seized it as belonging of right to his principality. Louis of France was not disinclined to interfere in the dispute, but Henry conciliated him by a visit, during which he contracted his son and heir to Louis's daughter Margaret, though they were both infants, the French king even consenting that the Princess should be entrusted to a Norman baron for her education : and

when, secured from any interruption in that quarter, Henry had compelled Conan to surrender Nantz, he formed a similar connexion with him, obtaining Constance his only daughter and heiress for his third son Geoffrey; in consequence of which betrothal, on the death of the duke of Brittany, an event which took place about seven years afterwards, he took possession of that duchy as the guardian of his son and daughter-in-law. Excited by this success to aim at further acquisitions, he invaded Toulouse, to which he had a legitimate claim, as Eleanor his queen was the heiress of William the Fourth, count of that territory; and Louis, while Eleanor was his wife, had looked upon her claim as incontestable, but now that she was married to one of whose power he was so jealous, his opinion changed, and he threw himself into the city to protect her cousin Raymond, who was in actual possession of the principality. Henry had a more permanent and obedient army than had ever been at the command of his predecessors, having commuted the personal service of his English vassals for a payment in money, which he made use of to levy troops who were willing to serve as long as he required them, while the period during which the knights were bound to remain in arms was only forty days. And he might easily have stormed the city and taken Louis prisoner, but he abstained from a step which, in those times of feudal reverence for superiors, would have looked like offering personal violence to his liege lord; he retired from the walls, and made peace with the French monarch, which was soon nearly disturbed by his wish to obtain possession of Gisors, which, as a part of the princess Margaret's dowry, had been entrusted to the Templars to be delivered to Henry after the celebration of her marriage with the infantine bridegroom. Henry now caused the wedding to be solemnized, and took possession of Gisors; but Louis, complaining that he had been overreached, would have declared war against him for his conduct, had it not been for the mediation of pope Alexander, then a resident in France. The two sovereigns met him at the castle of Courcy on the Loire, and though he was at this time a fugitive from Rome, where his rival Victor was in possession of the triple crown, they treated him with such respect as to dismount from their horses to receive him, and each holding a rein of his palfrey, conducted him thus in triumph to the castle.

Having thus settled his affairs on the Continent, he returned to England, which had been ably governed during his absence by the earl of Leicester and Richard de Lucy, whom he had united in the office of great justiciary, a post not hitherto usually held by a layman, but which Henry, who perceived the necessity of repressing the growing power of the clergy, did not choose to entrust to one of their body. But the minister whom he regarded

with the greatest favour, and in whom he placed the highest confidence, was Thomas Becket, a man of respectable but not of noble birth. His father or grandfather had been a merchant at Rouen, and had subsequently migrated to London, where the future archbishop was born about the middle of the reign of Henry I. Since the Conquest, no man of English birth had been allowed to rise to any considerable post in his native country, but Becket's abilities were sufficient to overcome prejudice. They had recommended him at an early age to the favour of archbishop Theobald, who had made him archdeacon of Canterbury; and, having attracted the notice of Henry, who was anxious to discover, and able to appreciate merit of any kind, he was made chancellor of the kingdom, and speedily became the monarch's most chosen councillor. Honours and lucrative grants were heaped upon him, and he was entrusted with the education of prince Henry, the king's eldest son. His various preferments made him enormously rich, and his magnificence and luxury were such as had never before been beheld in a subject of any kingdom in Europe. When he attended Henry on one of his warlike expeditions, he carried with him 700 knights of his own household, 1200 more whom he engaged to serve him for pay, and 4000 hired soldiers; and (what made almost equal impression on the chroniclers of the time) when at home in his own palace, he provided clean straw every day for the nobles who came uninvited to his table, that they might not soil their clothes by sitting on the floor. As a minister he was vigorous, and at the same time prudent. Many of Henry's wisest measures are attributed to his advice; and he cordially concurred with his master in compelling the clergy to bear their share of the burdens of the kingdom, and in abridging many of the privileges which their ambition and arrogance led them to assert. His conduct in forcing them to bear their proportion of the scutages, as the commutation of the knight's service for a pecuniary payment was called, had even brought upon him the severe displeasure of his early friend and patron Theobald. And on Theobald's death, ^{A.D.} ^{1162.} in the eighth year of Henry's reign, in spite of the warnings of his mother, and the opposition and vigorous remonstrances of the bishops who were to elect him, the king named him as his successor, confident that he would be as compliant an archbishop, as he had found him a chancellor.

He was speedily undeceived. While his appointment was doubtful (and it was delayed above a twelvemonth by the unanimous reluctance of the bishops, which was only overruled at last by the king's positive command) nothing in Becket's conduct seemed to indicate that he was disposed to take a different view of his position from that which he had previously entertained.

He continued to study the king's humour with the same course of jovial feasting, of hunting and hawking as before, and to indulge his own taste for display by undiminished pomp and magnificence. But no sooner was his election formally announced, than a total change took place both in his outward demeanour, and his conduct. He made as ostentatious a parade of his humility as he had ever made of his pride, washing the feet of beggars, wearing sackcloth next his skin, and allowing even that to become filthy and full of vermin for want of being changed, while his food, and the water which was his only drink, were studiously made disagreeable to the palate; his prayers were incessant, his scourgings frequent and conspicuous. When he had thus given, as it were, public advertisement of the rigour of his future virtue, he proceeded in the path he had marked out for himself with a view to the aggrandizement of the order to which he now belonged. Without consulting the king he resigned the chancellorship, on the plea that his new duties were so onerous as to require all his attention, though that office had hitherto been invariably filled by a bishop; and though the chancellors of the empire at that very time were the archbishops of Mentz and Cologne. Henry was exceedingly annoyed, and insisted on his also resigning his archdeaconry, which he was very unwilling to do, as its emoluments made it one of the richest pieces of preferment in the kingdom; but when he found the king inflexible, he began to retaliate by an invasion of the royal prerogative. He summoned Henry himself to surrender to him the town and castle of Rochester, and the earl of Clare to yield up the barony of Tunbridge, though it had belonged to his family ever since the Conquest, on the plea that these possessions had formerly belonged to the Church of Canterbury, and were therefore incapable of being alienated from it, and went so far as to excommunicate the lord of the manor of Eynsford for resisting his claim to appoint a priest to the living of that parish, though he was compelled by Henry to withdraw that sentence.

More important causes of difference soon arose between the king and his ambitious and intractable subject. The encroachments attempted by the ecclesiastics in every kingdom in Europe were daily increasing, and the privileges and exemptions which they asserted were of such a character, and of such importance, that, if granted, they would have placed the whole constitution in subjection to them, and would have rendered the greatest nobles, and even the sovereign himself, mere puppets in comparison with the meanest minister of the Church. These consequences Henry foresaw, and was determined to prevent; and Becket, while chancellor, appeared to share his views, and had acquiesced in the severe reprimand he gave the bishop of Chichester for seeking to uphold

"the papal authority, which was derived from the mere concessions of men, against that of a king, which was derived immediately from God Himself." The Conqueror had incautiously been led to order that all ecclesiastics should be tried by the ordinary, and, construing this into an exemption from all secular jurisdiction, they had established, in effect, a complete impunity to themselves for every sort of crime; and this impunity generated such a lawlessness of conduct, that in the first few years of Henry's reign above a hundred homicides were committed by the clergy, while their acts of rapine and licentiousness were too numerous to be recorded, or even calculated. More recently they had introduced another practice, if possible still more monstrous and mischievous in principle than the other, and the parent of that sale of indulgences which at a later period alienated so large a portion of the Christian world from the Church of Rome. Their authority to inflict penances for sin had long been admitted, and they had lately begun to teach that the redemption of these penances for a sum of money was equally efficacious for the pardon of the sinner, with the submission to the punishment enjoined by the confessor. There were few nobles in that age who were not glad to purchase a licence for their debaucheries and cruelties at so easy a rate; and it was computed that from this source alone more money flowed into the priests' coffers than all the taxes produced to the king's exchequer. These and other pretended rights of the Church Henry resolved to terminate; and having summoned an assembly of the nobles and bishops at Clarendon, he procured the passing of a set of laws, from the place of meeting commonly known as the constitutions of Clarendon, which defined the matters in dispute between the Church and the civil power with precision, put an effectual stop to all future encroachments of the clergy, established the superiority of the civil over the ecclesiastical power, and in their ultimate consequences secured the independence of England; and, that the clergy might not at any future time pretend that they had not consented to these laws, and were therefore not bound by them, he desired all the bishops to affix their seal to them, and promise to observe them faithfully. Becket at first refused; but finding that he stood alone in his opposition, and that Henry was resolved to compel his assent, he at last swore to observe them legally with good faith, and without any fraud or reservation. The pope, however, when applied to by the king to confirm these enactments, refused his sanction to the greater part of them; on which Becket, when he found himself likely to be supported in his opposition to the king, retracted his oath, and endeavoured to persuade the other prelates to imitate his example; imposing penances upon himself for his compliance, and entreating absolution

from the pope both for having taken the oath and for the subsequent violation of it.

There was now open war between the king and the archbishop ; and there can be no doubt that up to this point the king had right wholly on his side ; but in the further conduct of the dispute he lost his temper, and many of the steps that he took in it were devoid of wisdom and of justice. He instigated one of his officers to bring an action against the archbishop for some land ; and though Becket, by acknowledging the authority of the court, gave a practical obedience to the most important of those very constitutions which were the cause of their quarrel, Henry took offence at his non-compliance with some trifling formalities, and in a great council at Northampton caused him to be declared guilty of treason for despising the king's court, and confiscated all his property. Not content with this severity, he demanded of him the repayment of large sums which he asserted to be due from him ; and when the archbishop had satisfied these demands, he made a further claim of 44,000 marks on the ground that while chancellor, he had received the revenues of the vacant dignities of the Church, and was bound to account for them. Becket's answer that when he was consecrated archbishop, the justiciary, with the king's consent, had given him a full release from all such claims, must be admitted to have been sufficient ; but, though the poor sympathized with his affliction, the nobles were all on the side of the king, and it was plain that the justice of his defence in this instance would not avail him. He determined to represent his cause as the cause of religion and of God. He went in state to church, and celebrated the mass of St. Stephen, beginning "Princes sat and spake against me;" then, clothed in his episcopal robes, and bearing aloft his silver cross, he marched into the assembly, and took the seat that belonged to him by virtue of his office. The assembly, however, were not so awed by his dignified demeanour as to be deterred from voting a sentence of imprisonment against him ; but he interrupted them when about to pronounce it by appealing to the pope, and then quitted the apartment. The same night he left Northampton, and, hastening to the coast, took a small boat, and fled to the Continent. He had now put himself in the wrong by his appeal to the pope, which violated the constitutions which he had sworn to observe, and which, even had he not consented to them, were not the less the law of the land. But Henry, in his turn, violated every principle of justice when he banished all his kindred, of every sex and age, and confiscated the property of all whom he suspected of being favourably inclined towards him.

He found shelter and protection in France, but from the pope he did not receive the uncompromising support on which

he had calculated. Afraid to offend Louis, and yet more alarmed lest Henry should, as he threatened, support the rival claimant of the papal dignity, Alexander exclaimed in despair that he was between two hammers. At last, when Becket seemed resolved to drive matters to extremities, and from his place of exile at Pontigny fulminated excommunications against all the king's party, Alexander, seriously apprehensive that the king might throw off, not only his deference for himself, but his allegiance to the papacy, reprimanded Becket for his violence, admonished him to adopt a more moderate and pacific conduct, and even promised Henry that Becket should be suspended till he should restore him to his royal favour. Whether Henry had ever been thinking seriously of disowning all allegiance to, and separating England from all dependence upon Rome, cannot now be decided; but such an event, though a most happy one when it did take place, would, in his time, have been most unfortunate for the country and for true religion; for manifold as the evils of the Church of Rome were, the world was not, as yet, ripe for their reformation. Education had not spread sufficiently for men to appreciate the truth; nor had men's minds been accustomed to reason with sufficient independence for them to discover it: and the probability is, that the separation from Rome, if precipitated, would only have produced a re-action which would have resulted in riveting her chains upon our nation more firmly than ever, and in postponing, perhaps for centuries, the enlightenment of the world.

A.D.
1170.

Becket had been in exile six years, when the mediation of the king of France and the pope produced a reconciliation between him and Henry. At a conference at Freitville, in Touraine, they entered into mutual explanations; and the king showed such eagerness to welcome his subject's return to his duty, that he condescended to hold his stirrup while he remounted his horse. As however he refused to give him the kiss of peace, on the plea that to do so abroad would look like compulsion, Becket's friends distrusted the sincerity of his good will. And the archbishop soon gave equal proof that neither time nor adversity had lowered his pride, or softened his disposition.

During his exile Henry had determined to have his eldest son crowned as his successor; Becket, who had heard of his intention, procured letters from the pope, forbidding any other of the English bishops to take upon themselves an office which belonged only to the primate; but the archbishop of York and the bishops of Lincoln and Salisbury disregarded the prohibition, and crowned the young prince in despite of it. No circumstance that had yet befallen him excited his wrath more than the invasion of what he claimed as his peculiar privilege. He was not pacified by the

assurance of Henry that the ceremony must be repeated, since the French princess, his son's bride, had not been crowned with her husband, and that he should officiate at its repetition; but procured from the pope a sentence of suspension against the archbishop, and of excommunication against the bishops; and sent these letters before him to herald his return to England. It was plain that he intended to renew the contest with the king more fiercely than ever. The excommunicated prelates crossed the sea to lay their complaints against him before Henry, who was still in Normandy, and the king in his perplexity complained aloud, that he had no one to deliver him from that turbulent priest. The words were but a natural sally of impatient indignation, but unhappily, four of his knights, who heard them, and who believed, with sufficient reason, that their master would have no peace while the archbishop lived, gave them a meaning which he never intended them to convey, and hastened to England to deliver him in the most effectual way. On the 29th of December they reached Canterbury, and murdered Becket in the cathedral while he was preparing to hear vespers.

When the news of the deed reached Henry, his vexation was extreme; nor could any event have happened more unfortunate for his interests at the moment. The unprovoked folly and insolence of Becket's conduct in openly seeking a renewal of the quarrel between the king and himself, would have alienated every reasonable person in every country from his cause; but now his murder, aggravated in the enormity of the crime by the sanctity of the place in which it was perpetrated, reversed the picture, and made him so generally looked upon as a martyr, that the Church of Rome, in whose cause he had fallen, met with the approbation of all her votaries when she canonized him as a saint. Henry sent ambassadors to Rome to protest that he had never authorized nor imagined the murder, and to disown its perpetrators; and after long negotiations the pope admitted his innocence, though he imposed a heavy penance on him for the rash words which had been the cause of so unpardonable an atrocity.

Henry now turned his attention to the conquest of Ireland, a design which he had meditated for some time.* That island was divided into five small kingdoms, the sovereigns of which were in the habit of electing one of their body to be the supreme monarch of the whole. One of the five, Dermot king of Leinster at this time, was a prince of unusually savage and odious character; he had oppressed the nobles of his province, and aggravated the cruelty

* An intimate connection had subsisted for some generations between these two islands. Harold's sons as we have seen had taken refuge in Ireland, after the battle of Hastings; and some Irish accounts represent Henry's feeling of the necessity of subduing Ireland as prompted by the fact that the Irish had given effectual assistance to Stephen.

with which he treated them by the grossest treachery ; and in 1153 he had further provoked the indignation of his brother sovereigns by carrying off Deworgilla, the wife of O'Rouarc, prince of Breffany, a subordinate district of Connaught, the ruler of which province was then the supreme king of Ireland. For many years dissensions, sometimes breaking out into actual civil war, distracted the island on his account ; till at last, when Roderic, who had previously succeeded his father as king of Connaught, in 1166 succeeded also to the supreme authority in the island, he united all parties against Dermot, who, after some ineffectual struggles to maintain his power, fled to England to implore the aid of Henry. As long before as the year 1155, Henry had taken advantage of the elevation of Breakspear to the papacy, the only Englishman who ever attained to that dignity, to obtain from him a grant of Ireland, and permission to annex it to his own dominions, on the condition of paying to the pope annually for ever a penny for every house in that island. But he had hitherto been too much occupied to avail himself of this sanction to his designs, and, when Dermot besought his aid, his quarrel with Becket prevented him from at once taking advantage of the opening afforded him, but he gave the deposed sovereign letters to his nobles, authorizing all who were disposed to do so to render him assistance. Strongbow, earl of Pembroke, and Fitzgerald and Fitzstephen, knights of high reputation, willingly engaged in the enterprise, and in the year 1169 Fitzstephen seized Wexford. Strongbow, whose preparations were more extensive, delayed his expedition till the following year ; and before he set out he received a mandate from Henry, recalling the permission he had given, and forbidding him to leave the kingdom. He disregarded it, sailed, took Waterford by assault, and celebrated his marriage with Eva, the daughter and heiress of Dermot, whose inheritance had been his principal temptation to undertake the expedition. Henry was alarmed at the progress which he was making, which seemed likely to end in his erecting Ireland into an independent kingdom for himself, and thus defeating the views which Henry himself entertained ; and issued an edict forbidding all intercourse with Ireland, and recalling those of his subjects who were already in that country ; but his apprehensions were pacified by the politic submission of Strongbow, who disclaimed all such designs as the king's jealousy had attributed to him, and declared himself prepared to surrender all the places which he had conquered to the king the moment that he appeared in the country. In October, 1171, Henry himself sailed from Milford and landed near Waterford. Before the end of the year he had received the submission of all the native princes of the island except Roderic, king of Ulster, and in the spring of

the ensuing year he returned to England, having in so short a time, and with so little trouble acquired the sovereignty of an island but little inferior to the dominions which he at that time possessed in Great Britain, and one which, from the excellence of its harbours, the fertility of its soil, the valour and lively genius of its inhabitants, well deserves to be considered what it is so commonly entitled, "the sister kingdom."

Henry had four sons, Henry, Richard, Geoffrey, and John; all now rising to a man's estate: but their behaviour to him, though, the most affectionate and indulgent of parents, caused him more grief and difficulty than even Becket himself; indeed, his very liberality towards them was the cause of their ill-treatment of him. He had destined each of them to be the lord of ample territories: Henry had already been crowned as the successor to his possessions in England and Normandy; Richard was appointed heir of Guienne and Poitou; Geoffrey inherited Brittany in right of his wife; and John, the youngest, was intended to receive Ireland as his portion. Unhappily Henry had given Eleanor, his queen, ground for jealousy by numerous infidelities, and she took the wicked revenge of exciting her children to rebellion against their father. Louis also, whose daughter Prince Henry had married, instilled into his son-in-law's mind the idea that, as he had already been crowned, (though in those days it was common, especially in France, to crown the son in the father's lifetime without the ceremony being supposed to give him a right to any thing beyond the eventual succession) he could lawfully claim a share, if not the whole, of his father's dominions; and he worked so skilfully on the ambitious, aspiring temper of the young prince that he declared war against the king, and his brothers, Richard and Geoffrey, ranged themselves on his side. Henry applied to the pope for his mediation, who was willing to interpose it in so unnatural a quarrel, but who found his interference fruitless; and to his barons for aid, but they were so discontented with the vigilance of his government and with the rigorous justice with which he had restrained their lawlessness, that they were more inclined to lessen his power than to uphold it; and Henry, though possessed of more ample dominions than any other sovereign in Europe, was forced to rely on bands of mercenaries called Brabançons, who in those days infested the Continent, offering the services of their swords to any power that would pay for them, as his chief defence against those who were most bound to honour and defend him. William, king of Scotland, also known in Scottish annals as the Lion, from his being the first to bear that device on his royal shield, thought the opportunity favourable for recovering Northumberland and Cumberland, which his brother Malcolm had ceded in the early part

A.D. 1174. of his reign ; but in the year 1174 he was taken prisoner in an accidental skirmish, and when Henry's own vigour on the Continent and that of Richard de Lucy, whom he had left as guardian in England, had brought his confederated enemies to agree to a peace, William was compelled also to surrender Berwick and other inferior fortresses, and to do homage to Henry for the crown of Scotland itself. It is a singular proof of the superstition of the age that his capture was commonly attributed, not to his own want of caution, or to the skill of de Lucy, his conqueror, but to the fact of Henry on that very day having made atonement at Becket's tomb for the rash words to which that prelate's death was attributed, and having received full absolution from the Church for all the share that he could be supposed to have in that atrocity.

The peace that ensued left Henry at leisure to provide, as he had it greatly at heart to do, for the future tranquillity of the land, by introducing a better system of laws, and providing, at the same time, for their more regular and certain administration. He abolished the pernicious principle of imposing only a pecuniary penalty for the most heinous offences, which in fact gave complete impunity to those who could pay it, and left the poor at the mercy of the rich. The trial by battle was so popular that he did not venture to put an end to it by any formal prohibition. But the trial by jury which he instituted was speedily seen to be a more reasonable way of deciding disputes, and gradually led to the disuse of the absurd test which made a man's innocence depend upon his skill in arms and his bodily strength. He divided the kingdom into six districts, the circuits of the present day, and appointed judges, who were annually to travel into each for the purpose of administering justice. And while engaged in this peaceful legislation he did not forget the defence of the country from foreign enemies ; but, by strict enactments, made it the duty of every one possessed of any property whatever in the land to furnish himself with arms for the general service of the country, on the general prosperity of which his own individual happiness must depend.

These beneficial reforms he was able to effect during eight years of peace. But in 1182 he was again disturbed by his sons' disobedience to himself, and by their quarrels with one another. Prince Henry, however, died the next year of a fever : and before his death he was seized with repentance for his undutiful conduct to his father, and sent to him, imploring him to visit and to forgive him. The king feared to trust himself in his hands, lest his illness and his repentance might both be feigned, but sent him his ring in token of his complete forgiveness. But when he heard that he was really dead he reproached himself bitterly for having refused his last request. Geoffrey also was killed soon afterwards, in a

tournament at Paris. Richard submitted; and the king was again at peace. But after four years, Philip Augustus, who had succeeded Louis on the throne of France, excited Richard to fresh acts of violence, out of which he intended himself to raise a pretence for invading Henry's territories; and because Henry, warned by the evil effects that had ensued from allowing his eldest son to be crowned, refused now to sanction the coronation of Richard during his lifetime, the prince again revolted, and did homage to Philip for the French territories belonging to England; while Philip pretended to invest him at once with the possession of them. The Church interfered in vain in this unholy quarrel. One legate excommunicated Richard; another threatened Philip with an interdict: but both princes disregarded their sentences, and prosecuted operations against Henry with such vigour, that he was forced to purchase peace by consenting to very disadvantageous terms. This, however, was not the worst grief that fortune had in store for him. He had agreed fully to pardon those of his barons who had taken part with Richard against him; and when the list was presented to him he was struck to the heart by finding it headed with the name of John, his favourite son, who had conducted himself through these intrigues with such cunning and duplicity, that he had never suspected him of being one of the chief encouragers of the conspiracy which had caused him such trouble and humiliation. His distress of mind brought on a fever, of which he died on the 6th of July, 1189, at Chinon, near Saumur, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign.

His quarrel with Becket, and the resolution with which he enforced the subordination of the Church to the civil power, caused some of the monkish chroniclers to depict the character of this great king in unfavourable colours, in which they have been followed by a Roman Catholic historian of the present age, whose work enjoys a high reputation among those of his own religion.* But to those who consider the events of his reign without that almost personal animosity which so commonly influences the priests of the Church of Rome against all who dispute their arrogant pretensions, it will appear that he had almost every quality calculated to make a man amiable, or a sovereign admirable. He was valiant, but fond of peace; an eager enforcer of justice without allowing it to degenerate into revenge; possessed of power which might have made him formidable to Europe, had not his ambition been so well regulated that he was content to seek no other additions to his dominions but such as were manifestly essential, or at least greatly conducive to their security; able to wield authority with a wisdom

* But Moore, himself a historian and a Roman Catholic, but not a priest, admits that Lingard was too full of sectarian prejudice to be a good historian.—See his *Life*, vol. vii. p. 11.

rarely equalled, yet never desirous to engross it to himself; a most affectionate parent, ever ready to forgive the gravest injuries, and, what is often harder still, the most wanton insults. As a lawgiver many of his regulations were so wise that they have been preserved almost unaltered to the present day. He was as steady in his support as he was penetrating and judicious in his selection of his counsellors; and if he was in some degree deceived in Becket, it may fairly be urged, that that prelate behaved with such consummate art before his elevation to the primacy, that suspicion itself could hardly have anticipated his subsequent actions; and suspicion was, of all vices, the one most alien to Henry's liberal and noble disposition. His dispute with the archbishop originated in the adoption of a policy not only just and reasonable, but also most essential to the maintenance of the royal authority, and the future peace of the nation; and if in the conduct of it he yielded so far to his indignation at his subject's insolent ingratitude, as to depart in some degree from both prudence and justice, his failure in that instance may be fairly set down as the only blemish in a long career, which, in its general, tenor, was virtuous, wise, and productive of great and lasting benefit to his country.

CHAPTER X.

RICHARD I.*

A.D.
1189
1193.



RICHARD, whose rebellion against his father had been in some degree the cause of his death, was filled with the greatest remorse when that event took place, and gave the best proof that the repentance which he expressed was sincere, by discarding those advisers who had encouraged or prompted his disobedience, and receiving into his favour in their stead the faithful ministers of Henry, though they had been constant in blaming his conduct and opposing his designs. The opening of his reign was signalized by a disastrous outrage which marks the character and feeling of the times. On the day of his coronation, some Jews endeavoured to force their way into Westminster Abbey to behold the ceremony; in a scuffle which

* Contemporary with this prince was the great king of France, Philip II, surnamed Augustus. In later reigns, when the affairs of England became more connected with those of the Continent, lists will be given of the contemporary sovereigns of the principal countries of Europe; but that course appears unnecessary till we arrive at the reign of Henry VIII.

ensued between them and some of the other spectators, one or two of the Jews were severely maltreated, if not killed, and presently a rumour spread abroad that the king had ordered a general massacre of that people. The pretext for pillaging them, for their reputation for riches was already universal, was too tempting to be neglected, and the populace began to tear down their houses, and to murder every member of their nation whom they could meet. It was in vain that Richard sent some of his chief officers from the banquet to stop the riot, and he was forced to go forth and exert himself to the uttermost before he could check the fury of the fanatical and greedy multitude. The example of London infected other towns wherever there were a sufficient number of Jews to be an object of attack; and at York, where they dwelt in great numbers, they were assailed with such violence shortly after Richard departed to the Holy Land, that they took refuge in the castle; and finding that they were unable to maintain that post, they came to a horrible resolution, imitated centuries afterwards by some of their brethren in Spain; they slew their wives and children, then collecting their most valuable property into a heap, they set fire to it and to their houses, and, throwing themselves into the flames, they preferred perishing in that desperate manner to allowing their merciless persecutors to enrich themselves with their plunder.

The object nearest Richard's heart was to join in the third crusade, for which large preparations were being made in every country in Christendom. Saladin, a sovereign of a most warlike disposition, and of the greatest abilities, had succeeded Nouredin as sultan about sixteen years before; and his reign had been marked by a series of victories over the Christians in Palestine, in which he had wrested from them Acre, Ascalon, and nearly every stronghold that they possessed; and, two years before Henry's death, he had taken Jerusalem itself. On the news that the Holy Sepulchre had fallen again into the hands of the infidels, all Europe was inflamed with a fanaticism which even those who did not share it thought it politic to feign, and with a determination to recover it for the true believers. Philip Augustus had announced his resolution to lead his troops in person; and Richard, who was probably not greatly influenced by religious considerations, but who saw in the enterprise an opportunity for acquiring military renown, which was his darling passion, determined to follow his example. His father had left him a large treasure, which he proceeded to augment by the most impolitic means, selling not only many of the revenues and estates belonging to the crown, but offices of trust and dignities of state, and even those to which the administration of justice belonged; replying to the objections of one of his less enthusiastic ministers, by the assurance that he would sell London

itself if he could find a purchaser. He actually did sell back to the king of Scotland the fortresses of Roxburgh and Berwick, and released him from the obligation of doing homage for any thing more than the territories which he possessed in England. When he had completed his preparations, he appointed Hugh, bishop of Durham, and Longchamp, bishop of Ely, guardians of the kingdom in his absence; enriched his brother John with such ample grants as he thought sufficient to satisfy even his grasping disposition, and to bind him by gratitude to his interests for the future; and departed for the Holy Land. At Easter, 1190, he joined Philip at Vezelay, on the borders of Burgundy, marched across France to Marseilles, and from thence he sailed along the coast to Messina, where he was joined by his fleet, which was to convey him and his army across the Mediterranean to the wished-for shores of the sacred Palestine.

The kingdom of Sicily had lately been usurped by Tancred, a natural son of a former sovereign of the island, who kept Joan, the widow of the late king, and sister to Richard, in confinement at Palermo. Tancred, therefore, having reason to fear that Richard might be unfriendly to him, restored queen Joan to liberty, and offered one of his daughters in marriage to Richard's nephew, Arthur, the infant duke of Brittany, but he could not altogether disarm Richard's suspicions; and as the jealousy of the sovereigns engendered ill-will between their subjects, quarrels took place between the English and Sicilian soldiers, in one of which the English forced their way into Messina and began to pillage and slaughter the unoffending citizens. Richard hastened in person to the scene of disturbance, and prevented his troops from committing further outrages, but erected his standard on the walls as a token that the town was at his mercy. This nearly caused a quarrel between him and Philip, who considered Messina his own quarters, and demanded in a menacing tone that the standard should be at once removed. Richard consented to take it down; but fresh causes of dispute arose between them. Tancred, whether truly or falsely it is impossible to say, revealed to Richard that Philip had instigated the Sicilians to attack the English; and Philip was offended at Richard's refusing to marry his sister Alice, as it had been previously agreed between them that he should do. But Richard brought forward such convincing proofs of the princess's misconduct, that it was impossible for Philip to insist on his adhering to his engagement, though the humiliation which he must have felt at being forced to consent to his breaking it, added to the secret jealousy which he had begun to cherish against him.

In fact there were many causes sufficient to create such a feeling in so ambitious a prince as Philip Augustus. The possessions of

the king of England in France were nearly equal in extent, and superior in value and importance, to his own. And though Richard held them, or most of them, only as fiefs, and in respect of them acknowledged himself a vassal of the French crown, yet his subordination was only nominal; the power that so many counties and principalities gave him was real and formidable. The lord of such ample territories might be a subject in the theory of the feudal system, but in effect he was a rival, whom his nominally subordinate position was likely to dispose the more to encroach on the authority and rights of his superior. The difference likewise that existed between the characters of the two allies did not tend to promote their cordiality. Philip was conscious of possessing talents far superior to those of Richard; and, in a time of peace, his far-sighted policy, and cautious but resolute wisdom, would have surely and easily established his pre-eminence; but, in an expedition like that in which they were at present engaged, the qualities in which Richard excelled, his great military skill, his lionlike valour, his almost superhuman prowess, and his princely liberality, displayed not only to his own countrymen, but to all who were engaged in the same enterprise with himself, threw the more cold-hearted deliberation of Philip into the shade, winning even from the French an admiration which their own sovereign's abilities in council and statesmanship were slower to extort.

For the time, however, matters went on smoothly, and the French king consented to Richard's marriage with Berengaria of Navarre, of whom he had become enamoured in Guienne, and who now came to Sicily with queen Eleanor, to join her intended husband in his expedition. Early in the spring of 1191 the fleets of the two nations sailed from Sicily; stringent regulations were made to ensure order and harmony during the voyage; from one of which we may infer that gambling was already becoming fashionable, and that, even while engaged in so holy an expedition as the crusade, gamblers who lost their money were liable also to lose their tempers; for the soldiers of inferior rank were forbidden to play for money at any game whatever; knights and barons, bishops and archbishops, were limited to a loss which should never exceed tenpence a day; and the kings themselves were the only persons who might play without any other limitation of their stake than their own discretion. The English fleet had not a prosperous voyage; a storm overtook the leading ships, drove several on shore at Cyprus, and compelled others to seek a refuge in the principal harbour of that island. Isaac, the king, plundered the wrecks, and refused the vessels which were still safe, though damaged, permission either to enter his port or to land their passengers. One of these vessels bore Berengaria and the dowager queen of Sicily,

and when Richard arrived the next day, he was excited to fury by such an insult to his relations; he attacked Isaac, stormed his chief town, took him prisoner, and loaded him with silver fetters as an ironical compliment to his royal dignity; nor did he release him till he consented to join in the crusade, to pay a large sum of money, and to surrender some of his principal fortresses as a security for his loyalty during the continuance of the Holy War. While at Cyprus Richard's marriage with Berengaria was solemnized and she was formally crowned queen of England.

In the mean time a fresh difference had risen between Richard and Philip; Guy de Lusignan, who had been king of Jerusalem till Saladin drove him from that city, had enjoyed his kingdom by virtue of his marriage with Sibylla, the descendant and heiress of Godfrey de Bouillon; but Sibylla had died without issue, and Conrad, marquis of Montserrat, who had married her younger sister Isabella, now claimed the title of king of Jerusalem, as having devolved on his wife by the death of her sister. The fact of Richard assuming the protection of Guy was sufficient to decide Philip to embrace the cause of Conrad; the other nations which made up the crusaders' host took different sides, and their operations were seriously impeded by the divisions which this competition for a lost dignity and an empty title caused in the camp.

When Richard landed in Palestine he found the Christians under Conrad engaged in the siege of Acre, which was then, as it has so often done since, offering a desperate resistance. His arrival soon changed the aspect of affairs. For nearly seven hundred years have his exploits been the theme of romances, the inspiration of minstrels; but neither romance nor minstrelsy has ever done more than justice to the mighty strength of that invincible arm which dashed in the gates of cities with the battle-axe; to the dauntless heroism which revelled in danger, which it seemed to court for its own sake; or to the still higher moral quality of manly fortitude which bore the triumphs of the enemy, and, harder still, the desertion of allies with unshrinking patience. His very enemies, barbarians and infidels though they were, gazed with admiration on the great hero of Christendom; and, ages afterwards, the Saracen mother would quiet her wailing child with his name; the Saracen warrior would marvel what could frighten his horse, when he could no longer see the lion-monarch of England.*

Acre soon fell; and Philip, impatient of being eclipsed by the renown of his ally, seized the pretext of political necessities requiring his presence in his own country, to abandon the expedition. He left, however, 10,000 chosen troops, with the duke of Burgundy

* Gibbon, relates that long afterwards a common expostulation of an Arab to a shying horse was, "What are you afraid of? one would think you saw king Richard."

at their head, under Richard's command; and took a voluntary oath to engage in no hostilities against his dominions during his absence. For a time Richard proceeded in the career of victory. Though very inferior in numbers, he gave Saladin the greatest defeat in the open plain that he had ever experienced. He took Ascalon, and advanced within sight of Jerusalem: but the weather became tempestuous, the rains and a scarcity of provisions, which began to be felt in his camp, prevented his making further progress, and he was compelled to retire to the coast, displaying in his retreat the most marvellous valour, and a consummate military skill of which he was not so generally supposed to be possessed.

While thus occupied in acquiring renown abroad, he received news from home which showed him that his presence was urgently required in his own kingdom. The insolence of Longchamp had caused universal discontent, of which the ungrateful John had endeavoured to take advantage; and when his endeavours to grasp the supreme power in England failed, he crossed the seas to stimulate Philip to invade his brother's continental dominions. Philip was sufficiently inclined to comply with such a suggestion; indeed, it is said that, even before he arrived in France, he had requested of the pope a release from the oath which he had taken, of doing nothing to the injury of Richard during his absence: and now, by advancing against him a charge of being privy to the death of Conrad of Montserrat, who, for some personal quarrel, had been murdered by the emissaries of the king of the assassins, he sought to justify his attempt to deprive him of his French territories. But the pope threatened him with ecclesiastical censures, and his barons refused to serve him against the universally revered champion of the cross; so that he was compelled to abandon the design. But the intelligence which he had received of his and his brother's intrigues alarmed Richard, and, having concluded a truce on favourable terms with Saladin, in the autumn of 1192, he set sail for England.

He was again unfortunate in his weather. His fleet was scattered in a storm, and the vessel in which he himself sailed was driven ashore in the Adriatic. He determined to proceed overland. He was too well assured of Philip's enmity to travel through France. He had also given offence to Leopold, duke of Austria, a worthless prince, who for a time had borne a part in the crusade, so that he did not venture to travel in his own character, but disguised himself as a pilgrim merchant, and so proceeded on his journey. He reached the Danube in safety; but in a small town near Vienna the imprudence of his servant betrayed him. Leopold arrested him, threw him into confinement, and, that nothing might be wanting to complete the infamy of the transaction, sold

him three months afterwards to Henry, the emperor of Germany. In all Europe there were but two persons who were not struck with horror at the atrocity and impiety of kidnapping and imprisoning the great king, who had done such mighty deeds for the glory of Europe and of Christianity : but Philip, his ancient friend and his late ally, and John, the brother whom he had loaded with benefits, were those two. Philip entreated the emperor to keep him in perpetual captivity, or else to deliver him up to himself ; and, without waiting for his reply, took instant advantage of Richard's situation to occupy many of his strongest towns on the Continent : and John, spreading a false report of his death, endeavoured to get himself acknowledged as his successor, and seized one or two castles in England in the hope of being enabled to make good his claim. But Richard's ministers were too loyal to their trust to betray their master's interests to any one, much less to one so generally hated and despised ; and John found it prudent to retire to France. Meanwhile, Henry treated the king with every kind of indignity, confined him in a dungeon, loaded him with fetters, and at last brought him before the diet at Hagenau, accusing him of all kinds of crimes. Richard, though the tribunal was manifestly incompetent to try him, condescended to reply to the charges, and made so triumphant a defence, that this action of the emperor, instead of justifying his conduct, only made its atrocity and injustice more universally notorious. Henry could not continue insensible to the shame of detaining him ; and when the pope threatened him with excommunication, he agreed to ransom him for 100,000 marks. But presently he repented of his agreement, and even contemplated adding to his infamy, for John and Philip instantly offered him a much larger sum to break his promise, and he would have done so without compunction, if the remonstrances of the German princes had not compelled him to adhere to it. Seventy thousand marks were paid, hostages were given for the remainder, and in March, 1194, Richard arrived in England, where he was received with delight by his subjects, who had shown their anxiety in his behalf by the eagerness with which they contributed the money for his ransom.

During his lengthened absence England had suffered many evils which a wise statesman would have applied himself to remedy. Unluckily Richard's first and only thought was how to take speedy and severe vengeance on his enemies, and he could only do so by adding to those evils. On hearing of his release Philip had sent John instant information of it in a note containing only the brief hint, "Take care of yourself ; the devil is unchained." To procure John's condemnation as a traitor, and the confiscation of his estates, was easy ; but Philip could only be chastised by war.

Money was requisite for war, and money he proceeded to raise by the most unjustifiable expedients and the most oppressive exactions. He had not been home two months when he invaded France. The news of his preparations terrified John, who prevailed on their mother Eleanor to intercede with Richard in his behalf. Richard, who has often been compared to Achilles, was as passionate as that ancient hero, but not as implacable. He pardoned him; but his words showed his sense of the levity and worthlessness of his character. "I forgive him," said he, "and hope I may as easily forget his offences as he will my pardon." The war in France was of a petty and uninteresting character; the most important battle which took place, was a cavalry skirmish near Gisors, in which both the monarchs were personally engaged. The event was not long doubtful; the French proved as unable as the Saracens had been to withstand the furious onset and mighty prowess of Richard. Half their army was taken, and Philip himself was only saved from that fate with great difficulty. Another skirmish has become celebrated from being the cause of the capture of the bishop of Beauvais, not in his sacred vestments, but in the complete panoply of a knight. He had been the ambassador at the court of Germany, who had so earnestly pressed upon Henry the acceptance of Philip's shameful offer; and Richard resolved to make him feel, in his own person, the hardships which he had been so desirous to continue to himself. He loaded him with chains, and threw him into a dungeon at Rouen. The pope besought the king to pity "his dear son," and received in reply the bishop's coat of armour, with the text attached to it, "This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or not." The pope confessed that it was the coat of a son of Mars, and that the bishop must trust to Mars to deliver him. But Richard had the greater influence with the god of war, and the bishop lay in his dungeon till the king himself descended to the grave.

The impoverished state of both kingdoms from the vast expenses of the crusade compelled them to make peace. Their animosity impelled them to break it, and to renew the war, which, though protracted, produced no event of importance, or of interest. Richard's military skill gained him some trifling advantages, but Philip's policy prevented him from deriving any real benefit from them. After three or four years of futile warfare the mediation of the pope seemed likely to bring about a peace between them, when Richard, in attacking the castle of one of his barons, who refused to surrender to him a treasure which he had found, and which he claimed as the superior lord, was wounded by an arrow in the shoulder; and the wound, though trifling in its own nature, was rendered mortal by the unskillfulness of the

surgeons. The archer who had inflicted the wound was taken prisoner, and brought before Richard, triumphing in having slain the enemy who had killed his father and his brothers; and the dying king showed his magnanimity by ordering him to be released, with a present of money; but Marcadée, the leader of his mercenaries, flayed the poor wretch alive, without his knowledge. Richard died on the 6th of April, 1199, in the tenth year of his reign, and the forty-second of his age. He had formerly appointed his nephew Arthur his heir; but being offended with his mother Constance, he had recalled that nomination, and on his deathbed he declared John his successor, and bequeathed to him the greater part of his treasures.

As a warrior, in an age when princes and nobles thought of scarcely any thing but war, Richard towers not only above his contemporaries, but above all the chiefs of many preceding and succeeding generations; and, that nothing might be wanting to his character as a perfect knight, he cultivated the softer accomplishments of music and minstrelsy with such success as to rival the reputation of professional troubadours. The historian is compelled to abandon the tale of his faithful Blondel wandering over Europe in search of the place of his captivity, and discovering it by singing under the windows of his dungeon a lay which the captive monarch had often loved to hear, and to which he replied on his lyre, his only solace in his tedious imprisonment; but of the merit of appreciating the art, and rewarding it with princely liberality, he ought not to deprive him by his silence. As a king he left to posterity one or two enactments of wisdom and humanity, establishing an uniformity of weights and measures throughout the kingdom and mitigating the severity of the law which confiscated the property of all shipwrecked persons for the benefit of the crown. He has been called cruel; but, though like too many warriors he was indifferent to human suffering, he does not appear to have been wantonly inhuman; on the contrary, though easily offended, and easily moved to severe revenge when exasperated, his treatment of his brother John showed that he had a great portion of the kingly virtue of placability. Though so great a soldier he was not a conqueror, nor was his reign happy or beneficial to his subjects; exposed to anarchy in his absence, and when he was at home, ground down by exactions to support him in the wars which he was incessantly waging or meditating.

CHAPTER XI.

JOHN.

A.D.
1199
1216.

HE two Williams had made tyranny formidable; the two Henrys had rendered it respectable; but John seemed to be raised to power to show that it could be at once dreadful, odious, and contemptible.

Destitute of even the lowest of good qualities, personal courage, the want of which seems stranger in an age of universal warfare and general ferocity than even in our own, there was no vice that can disgrace humanity that he had not in excess. Grasping, though ungrateful; boastful, but too cowardly to attempt to perform his boasts; revengeful against all who had injured or resisted him; cruel towards all from whom he apprehended resistance; abject before the powerful, violent to the weak; dissolute and licentious, without that cheerful disposition or gaiety of manner which too often makes profligacy attractive, and which in more than one of his successors has gained toleration, or one might almost say favour, from his own age, if not from posterity; impious, yet superstitious, he was an object of dread to women, of hatred to his countrymen and subjects, of loathing and contempt to all who were not by their situation exposed to his power. His infamy was rendered the more conspicuous by his having Philip for his contemporary on the throne of France,—a prince, who, as we have already seen, was ambitious, unscrupulous, and shameless, but who for vigour and statesmanlike ability has had few equals in the long line of French sovereigns.

John succeeded without opposition to all Richard's possessions except Brittany, which belonged by right to his nephew Arthur, a boy of only twelve years of age. Philip, whose main object was to reunite to the crown of France the great fiefs which marriage or inheritance had annexed to the English one, was desirous to seize that duchy, but expecting greater advantages from conciliating John, he preferred compelling the young prince to do homage for it to his uncle, receiving from John as a reward the promise of being declared heir of all his continental dominions in the event of his dying without issue. But John soon offended his barons by divorcing his wife, the daughter of the earl of Gloucester, and prevailing on the count of Angoulême to give him his daughter

Isabella, though she had been already betrothed to the count de la Marche. The barons united to avenge the wrongs of their brother baron; and Philip, eager to take every opportunity of diminishing John's power, encouraged the youthful Arthur, now sixteen years of age, to assert his independence, married him to his daughter Mary, though she was barely five years old, and furnished him with an army to support his claims. Arthur took the town of Mirabeau, and was menacing the castle into which Eleanor, the queen dowager, had thrown herself, when John, bracing up his nerves to fight a boy, undertook the only military expedition in which he ever succeeded, hastened at the head of a large force to relieve his mother, and in a skirmish at the gates took Arthur prisoner. The fate of the young prince has never been actually cleared up; but John's silence under the imputation may be almost taken as a proof of the correctness of the common report, which told that the unnatural monarch murdered him with his own hands, and threw him into the Seine. The report spread instantly over the province. The Bretons appealed to Philip to revenge the murder of their duke. He received their appeal, so favourable to his own projects, with delight; summoned John as a vassal of the French crown to clear himself of the charge of murder before his peers, and on his refusal, pronounced him guilty as a felon and a traitor, and adjudged him to have forfeited all the lands of which he was possessed in the French territory. He lost no time in carrying out the sentence, but invaded the different states thus pronounced forfeited with a powerful army. Fortress and city fell in rapid succession. John affected to laugh at the progress of the enemy, boasting that when the time came for him to exert himself he would retake more in a day than they took in a year; but to a coward the time for exertion never does come; and in the short space of three years he lost nearly the whole of his continental dominions without striking one blow in their defence.

While thus dishonoured abroad he became entangled in still greater difficulties at home from a dispute concerning the appointment of a new primate. In no action of his life does he appear to have acted with equal prudence and moderation to that which he displayed in the first steps he took to secure the appointment of his nominee, the bishop of Norwich, in preference to Langton, the object of the selection of the pope; yet even here his prudence was manifestly the result of timidity, as he abandoned the right exercised by all his predecessors, and was content to intimate his wishes privately to the canons, who were the nominal electors, instead of issuing the mandate that precedent authorized. And when he found that Innocent the Third, an ambitious and able pontiff, had compelled the monks, who had been sent to Rome as a deputation

to treat on the matter, to give up the bishop of Norwich, and to elect Langton in his stead in spite of their oaths, and that Innocent had proceeded to consecrate him at Viterbo, the injustice of his conduct in wreaking his vengeance on the monks who remained behind, so little resembled the effects of righteous indignation or real courage, that Innocent, who, even if he had not known his character before, might have divined his want of firmness and resolution from his precipitation and violence, took the audacious step of laying the kingdom under an interdict to enforce his submission; two years afterwards proceeded to a personal excommunication of him; in 1212 issued a sentence by which he absolved his subjects from their allegiance; and the next year promulgated a further sentence, deposing him from his rank, and giving his kingdom to Philip, who, though he had himself in time past smarted from the effects of papal insolence, and had learnt by personal experience the encroaching character of papal usurpation, was now seduced by an ambitious desire to become master of England, to sanction the most preposterous usurpation of all, and to admit, in its fullest extent, the claim of the Church of Rome to be looked upon as endued with authority over all Christian princes, and as entitled to dispose of their kingdoms at her sovereign and unquestioned pleasure.

At the first moment John made some little show of spirit and vigour; prohibiting the clergy from reading the various sentences in the churches, and declaring all those who obeyed them guilty of treason, and confiscating their estates as traitors. He even showed such a practical disregard of these sentences himself, that he levied a numerous army, with which he marched to the north to bring the king of Scotland, with whom he had some dispute, the nature of which is not certainly known, to submission, and compelled William to pay a large sum of money, and to renew his homage for his kingdom. During his father's reign he had been sent to Ireland to complete its conquest, but he had only alienated the chieftains of that country by his incapacity and insolence; but now he crossed the sea to that island a second time, received the willing homage of some of the nobles, reduced others who were more refractory to submission, and made some advantageous regulations for the government of the province, dividing it into counties, and establishing the English coinage and the English laws. Returning to England, he checked the Welsh who had been ravaging the frontier with their customary incursions, and compelled Llewellyn, the prince of that country, to give hostages for the future pacific conduct of his subjects, whom it was found the next year that no treaties could restrain, and the wretched hostages were hanged in revenge for fresh inroads of their countrymen.

Unhappily he was incapable of long carrying on a dispute, or indeed of long behaving in any matter with dignity or steadiness; an able and firm prince might have very probably united the sovereigns of Europe in opposition to the monstrous claims of the pope, from which they had most of them suffered in their turn, for Innocent, at the beginning of his reign, had laid France under an interdict, and had recently excommunicated Otho, the emperor of Germany; but no one could expect either credit, safety, or additional strength from an alliance with John; and the consequence was that even those who ought properly to have considered his cause their own, sided with the pope against him, forgetting that in so doing they were siding with him also against themselves. Cowed at last by the steady arrogance of Innocent, John made the first overtures towards a reconciliation, offering the most humiliating submission; but the pope rose in his demands as the king's terror increased, till at last John actually consented to resign his kingdom into the hands of Pandulf, the papal legate, and to receive it again from him to be held for the future as a fief of the A.D. Roman see, for which he and his successors were to be bound 1213. to pay a heavy sum annually to their liege lord, the pope.

It was difficult for any action to be more base than such a submission; but John contrived to find a lower depth of baseness still in the aid which he sought to deliver him from its consequences. From the threatened invasion of Philip it did indeed save him, since the pope now took England under his protection as having become part of the patrimony of St. Peter, and commanded him to desist from his meditated enterprise; a mandate which Philip, whose barons were unwilling to be disappointed of the rich booty which they anticipated, would probably have disobeyed, had not lord Salisbury given it additional force by burning his fleet in the French harbours; but it did not secure John the obedience of his barons, exasperated by his tyranny, from which neither their property nor their lives were safe, and by his licentiousness, which respected not the honour of their nearest relatives, trampling alike on the highest rank and the most spotless reputation; and, as their discontent seemed likely to break into open rebellion, against which no Christian potentate would aid him, he turned to the infidels, and sent an embassy to Mohammed, the victorious emir of Spain, offering, as the price of the assistance which he solicited, to hold his kingdom of him as his liege lord, to pay him tribute, and to forsake Christianity for Islamism. The largeness of such offers raised suspicion in the mind of the prudent Saracen, and finding the notions, which he conceived from them of the value of his proffered convert, confirmed by the replies of the ambassadors to his questions, he dismissed them civilly without accepting any of their offers,

or granting them the succour for which their master was so anxious.

Weak as he was, he provoked the further enmity of Philip by invading France, advancing as far as the city of Angers, and his further contempt by the pusillanimity with which he fled, without striking a blow, at the approach of Louis, the French king's son. His foreign mercenaries he led back to England, where he began to attack the castles of those nobles whom he thought unfriendly to him, burning and pillaging in every direction as if he were in an enemy's country. His English troops he left behind, under the command of the earl of Salisbury, to join the emperor Otho in the campaign which was terminated by the great battle of Bovines, which established the power of Philip, and put an end to all John's hopes of aid from the Continent. Salisbury himself was taken prisoner by the bishop of Beauvais, who, having been released by John for heavy ransom, had not learnt from his captivity to cherish a less warlike disposition, but who now bore a huge club as his only offensive weapon, that he might not sully the purity of his episcopal character by acts of such positive bloodshed as he might have been led into committing if armed, as of old, with sword and spear.

John had now no resource against the indignation of his barons, which gained great strength from the promotion of Langton to the Primacy. That prelate, as we have seen, had been appointed by the Pope, in opposition to the king's wishes. And he showed his sense of John's ill-will towards him, even when absolving him from the pope's sentence, by making it one of the conditions of his absolution that he should promise to redress the grievances of the people. He now openly joined the party of the nobles, and speedily assumed that lead in it which learning and abilities (which in him were very conspicuous) commonly gave the clergy over the unlettered nobles of that age. Henry the First had granted his subjects a charter remedying many evils that had been previously complained of, and granting or confirming to them many valuable privileges, and copies of it had been deposited in the principal abbeys of the kingdom: one of these copies Langton now produced, and exhorted the barons, whom their wrongs had united in a firm confederacy, to make that and the laws of Edward the Confessor*

* "The laws of Edward the Confessor are lost. The great Alfred was a legislator; and Edward is represented as having revised and improved the laws of his predecessor Edgar, and, therefore, probably of Alfred, rather than as having instituted any code of his own."

William the Conqueror had already confirmed these laws. . . . And the code or charter of Henry I. was, no doubt, to a certain extent, modified and meliorated according to this favourite model; but of the model itself no further knowledge can be obtained: Our lawyers and antiquarians are therefore left to conclude that these celebrated laws of Edward the Confessor may now be imagined to us by what is called 'the common law of the land,' or the unwritten collections of maxims and customs which are transmitted from lawyer to lawyer, and from age to age, and have obtained reception and usage among our courts and judges.—Smyth's Lectures, I., 167-6,

(which, though probably little understood, were still regarded with general veneration, especially by the English part of the population) the basis of their demands. They unanimously adopted his advice, and committed themselves to his guidance; John refused compliance, shuffled, tried to separate the interests of the clergy from those of the laity by granting them a separate charter, then implored the interference of the pope, who was not inclined to see a body of fearless and haughty nobles lords of England in the place of an abject and submissive king, but whose letters and injunctions of moderation they could afford to disregard while they had the primate of England for their champion and leader against both king and pope. As peaceful expostulation and entreaty had no effect upon a sovereign, who, judging of others from himself, looked upon moderation as a proof of fear, they assembled in arms, and waged open war against him: they seized Bedford, and were gladly received by the citizens of London, till John, whose retinue was at last reduced to seven knights, was terrified into submission, and, on the 15th of June, 1215, on the plains of Runnymede, rendered for ever memorable by that event, he gave his assent to the Great Charter, usually known among us by its Latin title of *Magna Charta*, which in spite of the lapse of time, the change of manners, and the larger views of policy which the advance of civilization has introduced, still remains the keystone of English liberty, the grand outline of the English constitution, which subsequent laws have done little more than fill up and explain. It would be out of place here to give the enactments of this famous statute; but the great clauses which secured all freemen from arbitrary imprisonment and from arbitrary spoliation, which ensured the purity and the promptitude of justice, and which forbade, except under circumstances carefully limited, the exaction of money from the subject without the consent of the general council of the kingdom, are still considered by men of all parties as the embodied assertion of their most cherished and most essential rights. Four hundred years afterwards the violation of them shook the kingdom to its foundations, and brought a monarch, not without many virtuous and kingly qualities, to the scaffold. Half a century later a repetition of his imprudence drove that monarch's son from the throne, and the Great Charter received its final confirmation in the Bill of Rights.

The history of the Great Charter is especially remarkable in one point of view, as affording the only instance in our history in which all classes, churchmen, lay barons, and vassals all united in resistance to the king. Generally our history presents a series of contests between the king and the people, the intermediate party being the nobles, with whom in later times we must class the

great landowners, even when not dignified by baronial titles. They sided sometimes with the one, sometimes with the other, as circumstances dictated. In the king's struggles with the churchmen and the pope they espoused the cause of their sovereign, wisely looking on the welfare of the nation as deeply involved with his in the emancipation of the kingdom from spiritual shackles. But when the conflict was between the royal authority and popular rights, they looked on their own rights as identical with those of the lower classes, and energetically put themselves forward as the champions of the popular cause as the cause of all. Thus it was that they now extorted the Great Charter; and it was now that that alliance between the two classes was cemented which in more than one of the succeeding reigns preserved the liberties of both: for neither nobles nor burghers single handed could have resisted the imperious will and sagacity of the first and third Edward, both of whom were compelled to yield to their union, and to withdraw pretensions, the attempt to enforce which, in the teeth of their combined resistance, would certainly have been imprudent, and probably unsuccessful.

Past experiences had not yet taught John the value of honesty or the futility of resistance to the wishes of an united nation. He had no sooner sworn to the observance of the charter, than he began to devise measures to enable him to violate it with safety. He sent agents abroad to hire mercenary troops, and procured from Innocent, almost as shameless as himself, an absolution from his oath, and a general sentence of excommunication against all his subjects who should dare to claim his adherence to it. This iniquitous sentence the primate refused to publish, and the clergy agreed in disregarding altogether. But the barons, who had trusted too much to John's helpless condition, had disbanded their forces, and were placed in considerable danger by the arrival of his foreign troops, which he divided into two armies, taking the command of one himself, and giving the other to Salisbury; and the two ravaged the whole kingdom, committing castles, towns, and peaceful villages alike to the flames, and perpetrating every description of cruelty on the wretched inhabitants. Never, since the revengeful Conqueror devastated Northumberland, had such cruelties been beheld in England as were now perpetrated by its king on the subjects to protect whose rights he had so recently and so solemnly sworn. In this universal misery the barons applied to Louis, the heir of the king of France, for aid, offering to acknowledge him for their king, and justifying their selection of him by the circumstance that his wife, Blanche of Castile, was the granddaughter of their former honoured sovereign, the second Henry.

Innocent again threatened Philip with excommunication if he

permitted any invasion of the territories of a prince under his protection, but his menace was despised, and Louis was sent to England with a sufficient army. Many of the strongest places in the kingdom speedily opened their gates to him; but, as soon as they had time to recover from their first despair, the barons began to doubt whether they had done well to subject themselves and their country to a foreign yoke, and this feeling was strengthened by the impolitic conduct of Louis himself, who showed an almost exclusive attachment to his countrymen; and whom, from some disclosures that had been made to them, they began to suspect of intending to confiscate their estates and dignities in order to enrich foreigners, of whom the very fact of their requiring their assistance created a jealousy in their breasts. Many of them, in consequence, deserted Louis, and returned to their allegiance to John, who was on his march towards the south, resolved, if his courage did not fail him before the time of action, to fight one battle for his crown. Descending from Lincolnshire and proceeding along the coast, he lost a long train of carriages containing most of his treasure and ensigns of royalty in the sea, which at high water overflowed part of road along which he was journeying. The vexation, or, according to others, an immoderate feast of peaches and ale, threw him into a fever. He was removed by easy stages to Newark, where, on the 17th of October, he died, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the eighteenth of his reign.

No tyrant was ever so detested as John, but cowardice and baseness of every kind were, in him, so equally mingled with cruelty and licentiousness, that he was as much despised as he was detested. Yet infamous as was his character, and inglorious as was his reign, it cannot but be regarded as fortunate for England that he was what he was. So considerable were the continental territories to which he succeeded; so weak, in every thing but the character of its sovereign, was the French monarchy, that if he had been a valiant and an able ruler, directing the efforts of an united people with the sagacious ambition that inspired most of his predecessors, he would have acquired such an ascendancy that probably the whole of France would have gradually been absorbed in his more extensive power; and the inevitable consequence would have been, that England, though the conquering country, would have become a province of the larger and richer kingdom which her sovereign had subdued. Already she was but too much looked upon in that light by the king and by the nobles. Richard, who in his distant wars had proved the valour of his English troops, and in his captivity had learnt to appreciate the loyal fidelity of the peaceful portion of his subjects, and who regarded them with greater favour and treated them with greater indulgence than any

of his predecessors, yet often showed that he considered our island only an appendage to his continental dominions, valuable chiefly for its revenue, which enabled him to maintain his foreign wars. And the more ample the king's foreign dominions became, the more surely would that view have been confirmed. But John lost all his territories in the north of France, and, with his loss of dominion, his nobles lost their estates. They had, the greater part of them at least, no property left out of England, and from henceforth they were compelled to consider that their country, and to seek that safety and prosperity in the affections of the natives which they had hitherto been contented to rest upon their fears.

The temporary union of England with the Continent had been of great service to it, by quickening the civilization, refining the manners of the people, and giving them a wider acquaintance with mankind, and more extended views of policy. Its separation was now equally beneficial, by making it, for the first time, a really independent kingdom, deprived of foreign support, disentangled from foreign interests, free from foreign dictation, and forced to rely on the energies and virtues of its own people for its future grandeur and its future happiness.

CHAPTER XII.

HENRY III.

A.D.
1216
1274.



JOHN had left two sons, Henry and Richard; and Henry, who was just nine years old, succeeded to the throne with the unanimous consent of all the barons, except those who still adhered to Prince Louis; and before the end of the month in which his father died he was crowned at Gloucester by the papal legate Gualo. As he was so young it was necessary to appoint a regent; and Hubert de Burgh, the chief justiciary, was the person naturally pointed out by his situation for that charge; but as he was at the time closely besieged in Dover by Louis, it would have been impossible for him to have discharged its duties; and, therefore, the barons, who proclaimed Henry king, at the same time appointed the most illustrious member of their body, the earl of Pembroke, guardian of the king, and governor of the kingdom.

Some of the barons still adhered to Louis, who, being at the head of a powerful army, showed no inclination to relinquish his

hold upon the kingdom, but who, by his impolitic preference of his own countrymen, and appointment of them to every place of trust at his disposal, was rapidly alienating even those who had been most earnest in inviting, and most forward in supporting him; and Pembroke, with great judgment, took from them their last excuse for not coming over to their rightful king by causing Henry to confirm the Great Charter. It received a few slight modifications, some of which appear to us calculated to increase the royal prerogative in the most objectionable direction; though it is clear that they were not viewed in that light by those who proposed or consented to them at the time, while others were important additions to the comfort and security of the people. So much importance was attached to it, that in the first nine years of this reign it received a solemn ratification from the king no less than three times, and it has never been exposed to any substantial alterations since the last of these occasions.

This wise measure had the effect which Pembroke expected, and greatly strengthened the king's party. Louis himself was occupied with the siege of Dover. But Pembroke turned his attention first to the north, where the French commander, the count de la Perche, was threatening Lincoln Castle. In a battle, which took place under the walls of the city, the count was slain, and his army completely routed; and almost at the same time a powerful fleet, which was on its way from France with reinforcements, was met by Philip d'Albiny, whose name deserves especial record as the first of that long line of invincible admirals, whose achievements have secured to England the undisputed mastery of the sea. D'Albiny's ships were in number equal to only one-half of the French fleet; but, when by his seamanship he had gained the windward of the enemy, he is said to have blinded them by throwing clouds of quicklime into the air, which the breeze bore into their faces. The French fleet was defeated, and in shattered array bore the succour, so anxiously expected by their prince in Kent, back to the French harbours. These two disasters deprived Louis of all hope of being able to preserve his footing in the kingdom, and he was glad to agree to a peace, by which pardon was secured to his English partisans, and he and his army were allowed to retire unmolested to their own country.

No period in English history is more uninteresting than this reign. The establishment of peace abroad did not incline the barons to abate their turbulence at home. Unhappily Pembroke soon died, and he was succeeded as guardian of the kingdom by Hubert de Burgh, and the bishop of Winchester. De Burgh was not unequal to Pembroke in virtue and ability, and speedily obtained complete influence over Henry; but he was less popular with the

barons, who from their triumph over John had learnt their own power, and who fancied that they saw in some of his measures a desire to extend the royal prerogative at their expense. His influence over his master was simply that naturally acquired by a strong mind over a weak one, strengthened in this instance by the great services which, as Henry was well aware, he had rendered to the monarchy, and to the nation at large; but his enemies, accused him of having gained the king's affections by enchantment, and procured his removal from his office.

¹²³¹ The bishop of Winchester, who now enjoyed the undivided power, unluckily gave the nobles better-founded pretexts for their discontent by the preference for foreigners which he instilled into the king's mind. He was himself a native of Poitou, and now invited over numbers of his countrymen, on whom he bestowed all the most lucrative offices and posts of command in the kingdom. The Great Charter had rendered the king more dependent on his people than he had been previously, by stripping him of many lucrative prerogatives; but the bishop, who saw the greater comparative power which the nobles had in consequence obtained, took the injudicious step of trying to counterbalance it by favouring foreigners, instead of the more sure and safe, because more wise and just method of conciliating the natives by equity and moderation. Again their remonstrances became too loud to be disregarded. Henry, whom Pembroke, in order to strengthen him against Louis, had been forced to allow to take an oath of fealty to the pope, in vain appealed to him as his vassal for protection (his usual but disgraceful resource in times of difficulty), and was forced to dismiss the bishop, and to banish the Poitevins; but it was only to substitute for the old grievance another of the same kind; for, on his marriage with Eleanor of Provence, in 1236, her relations ¹²³⁶ came over in numbers to fatten on the wealth for which the kingdom was already becoming famous. The chroniclers of the time speak of Henry's magnificence on occasions of festivity as exceeding those of any monarch from Ahasuerus to Charlemagne. The pope had pronounced England to be an inexhaustible well; and the swarm of Savoyards, which now spread themselves like locusts over the land, seemed determined to test the truth of his assertion. The queen's uncle, the bishop of Valence, became Henry's chief minister; another native of the same country was made archbishop of Canterbury. Baronies, estates, and wealthy brides were lavishly distributed among the new visitors, who even induced the weak monarch to promise a bull from the pope, authorizing him to recal the grants which he had made to different English nobles, in order to bestow them anew on his foreign favorites. The queen-mother Isabella, too, who, on John's death,

had married her former lover, the Count de la Marche, and had borne him four sons, sent them over to England to get their share of the royal bounty, which was dispensed so liberally to all except those who had the best claim to it; and their rapacity, insatiable as it was, was hardly more offensive than the openness with which they proclaimed their contempt for the English laws, and the English manners.

Henry's weakness at home was not redeemed by glory abroad. If not actually a coward, like his father, he had none of that enterprising, daring valour so conspicuous in his earlier ancestors, and so essential to give influence to a king, whose principal subjects understood nothing but war, and war, too, of that kind that depended mainly on personal prowess. Yet destitute as he was of all military skill, he allowed himself to be seduced by the count de la Marche to engage in hostilities against Louis IX. At the head of 20,000 men he landed at the mouth of the Garonne, only to sustain at Taillebourg one of the few defeats that the French have ever inflicted on the English, in which he himself only escaped captivity by the address of his brother Richard, to whom Louis thought himself obliged for kindnesses which he had shown to some French knights in the Holy Land. The battle of Taillebourg led to a truce, and to negotiations which were continued (though more or less interrupted by war) for many years, and which were only concluded in 1259 by Henry's abandoning his claims on any territories in France except Guienne, and receiving a promise of some equivalents in future times, which, after the death of Louis, his successor never thought of performing.

The king himself and his favourites were the chief sufferers by the turbulence of the barons, but the whole nation was distressed and impoverished by the rapacity of the clergy, which grew more and more insolent and insatiable. The pope had gradually engrossed the appointments to most of the richest benefices, and they were sold at Rome in the most open and shameless manner to purchasers who sought to indemnify themselves by the most immoderate exactions. Not content with this source of gain, he proceeded to claim a portion of the revenues of every see in England, and, though this demand was rejected at the time, he shortly afterwards obtained a tenth of all the ecclesiastical revenues; and, as if this were not enough, he sent over a legate to extort a further aid, who by intrigues and menaces obtained such large sums from the different chapters, that it was said and believed that he carried out of the kingdom more money than he left in it. His success encouraged him to further exactions, till even Henry's patience gave way, and he prohibited compliance with his demands. The pope menaced him with excommunication; but, as the king

was supported by some of the bishops, and especially by Grossetête of Lincoln, he withdrew his threats, and abated some of his pretensions.

The pope, Innocent IV., however, was not only covetous of pecuniary gain, but he entangled Henry in vast expenses in the pursuit of political advantages in Italy and Sicily. Finding himself unable, by his own power, to dispossess the heirs of the emperor Frederic of Sicily, he offered the sovereignty of that island first to Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis IX., then to Richard, earl of Cornwall, and, when both those princes had the prudence to refuse it, he offered it to Henry for his second son, Edmund, who at first declined it, but shortly afterwards, on the death of Conrad and Henry, Frederic's legitimate sons, accepted it, agreeing to pay a large sum to the new pope, Alexander, (for Innocent had died during the progress of these negotiations,) and to hold himself responsible for all the money that the pope had contracted, or might contract, in the prosecution of the business. Henry had taken all these steps without consulting any of his councillors; and the chief nobles of the kingdom were prudently unwilling to assist in a project for conquering a distant kingdom to which the king had no right, and in which they could have no concern; but this reluctance was changed into indignation when, shortly after, the pope demanded from Henry above 90,000*l.*, as the expense of the military operations already undertaken, and though, when Henry summoned the barons in the hope of procuring the money from them, he summoned none of those whom he suspected of being most unfavourable to his views, he found the whole body animated by the same spirit, and they positively refused to grant him any money at all for such a purpose. He then turned to the clergy, who were hardly more willing to contribute than the barons; but they had less power of resistance, and the king was backed by the whole power of the pope, who sent a legate to England for the express purpose of wringing from them every farthing that could be appropriated from the ecclesiastical revenues; the money which had been collected for an intended crusade was seized for the same purpose; and, when Henry had thus assisted in impoverishing his kingdom to gratify the unprincipled ambition and still more unprincipled rapacity of the pope, he found the bait which had allured him further removed than ever from his grasp; for Manfred, a natural son of Frederic, who on the death of Conrad had assumed the command, and showed a desire to usurp the sovereignty of Sicily himself, had not only defeated the pope's attacks, but had also wrested from him important territories in Italy; and Urban, the successor of Alexander, could devise no means of checking his progress except by abandoning prince Edmund altogether, and

offering Sicily a second time to Charles of Anjou, who now accepted the offer, and, defeating Manfred at Benevento, A.D. 1266. obtained peaceable possession of the whole kingdom.

In the mean time the barons, whose discontent had been gradually increasing, had found a leader in Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, who had married Henry's sister, the widow of the earl of Pembroke; and who had lately returned from the government of Guienne, with a high reputation for activity and military skill, sullied, however, by many acts of tyranny, extortion, and cruelty. Henry's brother Richard, who alone could have counterbalanced his power, had lately been elected king of the Romans, and had quitted England to assume his new dignity. Being thus left without a rival, Leicester began not only to head the barons in the opposition which the king's prodigality, weakness, and almost exclusive preference of foreigners provoked them to make to his demands, but even to assume some degree of authority over the barons themselves; summoning them to meet him to consult on the measures to be pursued, and exciting them to such determined measures, that, when Henry next convened the whole body to request a supply from them, they appeared in complete armour, to show their determination not to shrink even from war itself, if necessary, to enforce the redress of their grievances. And they compelled him to sanction the meeting of a council or parliament* at Oxford, over which Leicester presided, which drew up a set of regulations for the future government of the nation, to which Henry himself, and his eldest son, Edward, who had already given indications of that courage and genius which, in after life, made him so illustrious, were compelled to subscribe, though they virtually transferred the whole power of the kingdom from the sovereign to this council.

However, its undisputed power was not of long duration; it became unpopular with the rest of the nation partly because men found that it failed to realize the hopes in which they had indulged when it was first appointed, and partly from the insolence with which its members showed that the objects which they had most at heart were their own wealth and aggrandizement. The earl of Gloucester too, the most powerful of the barons next to Leicester, began to grow jealous of his superior influence, and the council was distracted by their quarrels, till at last Gloucester joined the king's A.D. 1266. party, and Leicester retired into France, about three years after the meeting at Oxford.

At first, however, the usurpation of the barons had appeared so successful, that the clergy had been led to attempt to imitate it,

* This was the assembly known afterwards as the "Mad Parliament" from the violence of its proceedings.

and to make similar encroachments on the authority of the crown, for the advancement of the power and importance of their own order. But this conduct of theirs, though in general it would have been cordially supported at Rome, failed, on this occasion, to find favour with the pope, because he considered the main-spring of it to be their jealousy of the Italian and Savoyard priests, on whom Henry had showered the richest preferments of the kingdom. Accordingly he upheld the king against both clergy and barons, annulled the ordinances which the former had passed in their synod, and absolved Henry and all his subjects from any oath or obligation to observe the provisions of Oxford, as the regulations drawn up by the recent council, were usually called.

The king now began to resume the power of which he had been in reality deprived during those three years; he offered to submit all matters in dispute between him and his barons to the arbitration of Louis IX., a prince of singular moderation and virtue; who, instead of considering England a rival nation, and seeking to weaken it by fomenting its unhappy divisions, acted the honourable part of trying to reconcile parties, by bringing the mutinous nobles to a sense of their duty as subjects, and the king to a more prudent and steady course of government for the future. He might probably have succeeded in his benevolent endeavours, but unfortunately the earl of Gloucester died, and his son, who succeeded to his estates, hastened to attach himself to Leicester, and the disaffected party. Leicester returned to England and openly raised the standard of rebellion, while at the same time Llewellyn, the sovereign of Wales, invaded the counties nearest the Welsh frontier with a numerous army. He was, however, driven back to his mountains by prince Edward, whose character, daily developing the highest qualities, gained so many of the barons over to the king's party, that Leicester agreed to abide by Louis's arbitration, which he had previously refused, and sent one of his sons to France, whither Henry himself also repaired. Louis examined the whole question with scrupulous impartiality, and pronounced an award which was almost wholly in favour of the king. But, when Leicester heard the result, he at once rejected his decision and appealed to arms. Both sides collected powerful armies, which met at Lewes, in May, 1264. The king himself was present, but prince Edward was the real commander of the royal army. The portion of the rebel force that was opposed to the division which he commanded in person he easily routed, but his military ardour as yet so much exceeded his skill that he pursued the flying enemy so far as to leave the rest of his army exposed to be surrounded by Leicester, and when he returned from the pursuit, he found his father and his uncle, who had lately come to his

assistance, prisoners in the hands of the rebels. In a truce that was made shortly afterwards, the prince surrendered himself as Leicester's prisoner to procure his father's release; but the earl, in open defiance of the treaty, detained both king and prince in captivity, and began to treat every one, even his chief adherents, with such insolence, and to amass riches by such cruel and shameful expedients, conniving even at the pirates, who at that time were the disgrace of the Cinque Ports, on condition of receiving a portion of their plunder, that he alienated many of his partisans, and would have disgusted the whole kingdom, if his open defiance of the pope's power and commands had not, in the minds of many, counterbalanced all his other bad qualities and evil actions.

The year 1265 is ever memorable in the constitutional history of England, as that in which the first assembly, resembling our modern parliaments, was ever convened. The name, indeed, of parliament, (which was but a French term for council) was as old as, if not older than the conquest. Nor had there ever been a period when the king was independent of a national council. In the Saxon times it had been called the witenagemote, the meeting of the witan or wise men, the qualification for membership being, as is generally believed (for we have no certain information on the subject), the possession of a freehold estate. When William I., by the introduction of the feudal system, altered the tenure of land so that the nobility and greater gentry became vassals of the crown, his council was still composed of the same class, and enjoyed nearly the same powers; the chief difference being that, as the members now held their estates on condition of military service, they had no longer the power of deciding on questions of peace and war, which had belonged to the witenagemote. Their rights of requiring, and, to a certain extent, of providing for the redress of grievances, of regulating the administration of justice, and of granting supplies remained unimpaired. But in the two centuries which had elapsed since the conquest, the foundations of a change in the constitution of the assembly had been silently laid. In the time of the Conqueror the entire number of the great vassals of the crown who had seats in it scarcely exceeded 600. But their estates had, in most instances, gradually been divided; and two classes of proprietors had begun to be formed, and to be distinguished as greater and lesser barons. As the latter were too numerous to be all summoned to the council; and in many instances too poor willingly to incur the expense of attendance, a custom arose by which a few of them attended on the part of the whole body, at first by a kind of rotation, and, after a time, by election. These deputies of the whole body were representatives of their fellows, that is to say, of the landed interest only.

But the very evil which had been generally looked upon as the principal grievance of the nation under Henry, namely, his encouragement of foreigners, had indirectly been productive of good in enlarging the knowledge possessed by the people of other countries, and in opening a foreign trade, under which the towns had been rapidly increasing in wealth and importance. As they were able to command or to purchase indulgence, they in many instances obtained charters and other privileges; and now, while Henry was a prisoner in Leicester's hands, writs for a new parliament were issued, summoning, besides the greater barons, and the deputies of the lesser barons, two citizens or burgesses from many of the principal cities and towns, to represent and protect their interests also. Some years elapsed before this was established as the invariable manner of summoning parliaments; and it was not till the next reign that the commons were allowed a separate chamber, and recognized as a distinct branch of the legislative body. But these are but trivial incidents in comparison with the main fact, that it was thus, in this, in other respects, uninteresting reign, that the principle of the right of every class to be represented in the great council of the nation was established, and the foundation laid of the greatest assembly of freemen legislating for their nation, that the world has beheld.

The captivity of prince Edward had excited general indignation, and Leicester, ever aiming at the acquisition of further popularity, agreed to set him at liberty on condition of receiving considerable grants for himself, and for some of his adherents: but, even after he obtained his demands, he refused to release him, till at last his haughty behaviour alienated, as it had done before, some of the most powerful of the nobles, and among them the young earl of Gloucester, who opened a communication with the prince, and aided him to escape. This was the end of the rebellions against Henry. The most splendid valour and prowess had never been wanting to Edward, and the disaster at Lewes had taught him caution and military skill. It was on the 28th of May that A.D. 1265 he escaped from his keepers at Hereford. In the course of the ensuing month he took Worcester, Gloucester, and compelled the earl of Leicester to seek a refuge among the Welsh mountains. On the 1st of August he surprised his son, Simon de Montfort, at Kenilworth; and, on the 4th of the same month, utterly routed the father at Evesham. Leicester and his eldest son were killed, and the whole party completely broken. The king himself was near being slain. Leicester had dragged him with him from place to place, and had even compelled him to accompany him in armour to the field. He was wounded and unhorsed; but his cry that he was Henry of Winchester the King, reached the prince's ears, who

flew to the spot, and placed him in safety, while he himself completed the rout of the rebel army. After this victory there was no chance of any effectual resistance being made to the king's authority. One or two fortresses held out for a short time, and the citizens of London showed a mutinous spirit. But Edward soon terrified them into submission; and peace was restored. The prince was now his father's chief minister. He wisely judged that the rebels had been too many for it to be prudent, and perhaps, too, that their complaints had been too well founded to make it just to employ severe measures against them now that they had returned to their duty. A few of the most prominent or most refractory were compelled to pay fines, which were accounted unusually moderate; and the indulgence shown to the rest, and the general esteem in which Edward was held, restored confidence and diffused a general feeling of loyalty over the nation.

^{A.D.}
¹²⁷⁰ So completely tranquillized did the whole country appear to be, that four years afterwards the prince thought he could safely quit it to gratify his desire to join Louis IX. in the crusade, on which that monarch had already departed. His expedition, however, was not fortunate. When he reached the French camp in Africa he found that Louis was dead; and, though he proceeded himself to Palestine, and signalized himself by achievements which almost recalled the memory of the lion-hearted Richard, his prowess was unproductive of permanent results, while it had nearly been fatal to himself; for with such dismay did his exploits strike the Saracens, that, hopeless of subduing him in the open field, the sheikh of one of the eastern tribes, called the Assassins, sent one of his subjects to assassinate him; (most European languages have borrowed the term from the practice of those unscrupulous barbarians). The wretch stabbed the prince with a poisoned dagger; and a story was subsequently circulated that Eleanor, the Princess, who had accompanied him to the Holy Land, sucked the poison from the wound, at the hazard, as it was believed, of her own life, and that Edward felt no ill effects from the attempt.

His absence, however, was very prejudicial to his father's kingdom. The errors of Henry's government had proceeded from weakness rather than from vice, and age had not diminished that weakness. His want of firmness was bringing back the disorders which Edward's prudence and vigour had put down, and had prevented from reviving while he remained in England. But now the barons again became insolent and oppressive; the citizens of London returned to their licentious, mutinous spirit; Henry's brother, too, the king of the Romans, who was still in England, and who had had great influence and authority in the kingdom, was broken in spirit by the loss of his son Henry, who was mur-

dered in Italy by two of the sons of the earl of Leicester ; sorrow brought on paralysis, of which he died ; and Henry had no one to whom he could turn for advice or for support. He wrote earnest letters to his son, conjuring him to return ; but, before he could receive an answer, his health, which anxiety and distress had long been undermining, gave way, and in November, 1272, he died at Bury, in the fifty-seventh year of his reign, leaving behind him a character distinguished by no particular personal virtues nor vices. His reign was unhappy to himself, and full of trouble, arising from constant dissensions with his people ; but the free parliaments, which these troubles called into existence, have been the source of so many blessings, that it cannot be pronounced unfortunate for the nation.

CHAPTER XIII.

EDWARD I.

.D.
1272
1294.



EDWARD was thirty-four years of age when he ascended the throne of his ancestors, and of the highest reputation, not only for prowess and military skill, but also for the more valuable qualities of moderation, wisdom, and equity. Though he was abroad at the time of his father's death, the council of Henry caused him at once to be proclaimed king, in virtue of his hereditary right, without waiting for any form of election by the nobles, as had been the case on the accession of previous monarchs. He had quitted the Holy Land, and was in Italy, when he received the news of his father's death : but, as he learnt that his succession had been peaceably acknowledged in England, he delayed some time in France, settling the affairs of Guienne, and arranging a dispute with the countess of Flanders, who had seized the property of the English merchants trading in her dominions, on favourable terms ; so that it was not till the autumn of the year 1274 that he arrived in England.

He had ample occupation at first in re-establishing order and obedience to the laws throughout the kingdom. During the late reign they had been gradually reduced to a more regular system, and had become the subject of study to a distinct class of men, who began to cultivate the science as their regular profession. But this increased knowledge had been so greatly counteracted by the

archy arising from rebellion and civil war, that it had failed to induce any material improvement in the manners and conduct of population. Complaints of robbery, incendiarism, and murder were never more rife, and the perpetrators of these crimes were so frequently protected by powerful nobles that the magistrates were obliged to put the law in force against them. In fact there was still, for a long time subsequent to the period of which we are treating, a sympathy for those who sought to improve their condition by plunder, as for men who, by what, in other cases, has been called a sort of "wild justice," sought to redress the inequalities of fortune, or the wrongs inflicted by oppressors and usurpers; so even as late as Henry the Sixth's reign that eminent judge, Sir John Fortescue, actually exulted in the fact, that there were more robberies committed in one year in England, than in France in an even, and looked on it as a proof of the high courage of the nation, that, "if an Englishman be poor, and see another have riches which may be taken from him by might, he will not spare himself to so." With a spirit so general as thus to infect even those who were most likely to be the objects of plunder, and whose special duty it was to punish it, it was no easy matter to grapple successfully: but Edward was too ardent a lover of law and justice to make the attempt, or to allow such crimes to derive encouragement from impunity; and he appointed what in modern times would be called a special commission to travel through the kingdom, to put down such practices with unsparing severity. Throughout his whole reign his anxiety to secure equal justice to all his subjects was one of the most conspicuous features of his character; and, severe as he was towards all offenders, were there any on whom he inflicted heavier punishment than on those judges who, on one occasion, took advantage of his absence from the country to gratify their rapacity, screening the most atrocious criminals who could be bought by sufficient bribes. His feeling that, wherever practicable, justice, to be satisfactory, must be cheap and speedy, led to the establishment of justices of the peace, who continue, with very slight alteration of their powers and duties, to the present day. It would exceed our limits to enumerate the additions which, amid his more active operations, he found time to make to the English code, tending so greatly to its improvement and completion, that, above 300 years afterwards, Sir M. Hale, one of the most illustrious of English judges, remarked, that he left it so perfect that since his time it had neither received nor required any considerable increase or alteration.

In one instance his zeal to remedy disorders led him into measures of severity which were not only unjust and oppressive, but also impolitic. The adulteration and clipping of the coinage,

an evil which had been often complained of in past reigns, and had been forbidden by most severe enactments, again prevailed to a greater degree than ever, and was attributed, probably with truth, to the Jews, then the principal money-dealers in the kingdom. They had first come to England in the time of the Conqueror, and, though their riches often exposed individuals to extortion and cruelty, such as that practised by John, who commanded a Jew to lend him a large sum of money, and ordered one of his teeth to be drawn every day till he complied; and though, on more than one occasion, they had been the objects of more organized violence from the populace, they had been generally encouraged by the sovereign and protected by the law; but, from the beginning of his reign, Edward was unfriendly to them; prompted, according to some of the ancient chroniclers, by his mother, or by his wife, who procured from him the greater part of their spoils; but, more probably, by a desire to comply with the wishes of the parliament, and, indeed, of the great body of the people, who complained generally and loudly of their usurious practices.* He forbade them to build synagogues, he compelled them to wear a distinguishing dress, he levied an exclusive tax upon them. Of this charge of tampering with the coinage great numbers were now convicted, and hanged, and all their property was confiscated. While punishment fell only on the guilty there was no cause for complaint, for their crime was injurious to public credit, and productive of great misery to the poor; but three or four years later every one of the Jewish race in the whole island was thrown into prison, nor were they released till they paid a fine of 12,000*l.*, though, on this occasion, no charge was made against them; and in 1290 the whole nation was banished. They were allowed to take with them a small supply of money to furnish them with the means of travelling to other countries; but all the rest of their possessions, their houses, and lands, and the treasures which they had accumulated were seized by the king. Their number was upwards of 16,000; and as they were not only a rich, but an industrious and sagacious body of men, the prosperity of the kingdom received a great check from this banishment of them, as Spain did afterwards from the adoption of a similar measure by Ferdinand and Isabella.

Edward had been probably led to this unjust and impolitic measure by the necessities of his treasury, which the Great Charter prevented him from replenishing by the arbitrary exactions of the Norman kings. He adopted a wiser plan when he remodelled the administration of his revenue, introducing the strictest economy into every branch of the expenditure, checking the encroachments

* It was alleged that the interest which they habitually required for loans varied from 40 to 65 per cent.

which his father's weakness had encouraged, and by his prudence conciliating all classes, so that the parliament voted him the taxes which he requested, and the pope sanctioned his levying a corresponding contribution on the ecclesiastical revenues.

He had been but a short time on the throne when he undertook the reduction of Wales. For a very long period there had been an almost incessant border warfare between that country and England, provoked chiefly by the Welsh, who made incursions on the more fertile plains of the neighbouring counties, and, when loaded with booty, sought shelter among the fastnesses of their native mountains. They had been particularly obnoxious to Edward during his father's reign, as taking the part of, and affording a refuge to Leicester, and one of his earliest expeditions as a commander had been an invasion of their territory, in which he penetrated as far as Snowdon without being able to bring them to battle. He now determined to prevent any repetition of these hostilities by the complete subjection of the country; and Llewellyn the king was unwise enough to afford a legitimate pretext for attacking him, by refusing to come to England to do homage for his crown, as his predecessors had done. At first Edward was assisted by intestine divisions among the Welsh, as Llewellyn's brother David, who had been deprived by him of his inheritance, sided with the invader, and Llewellyn was soon reduced to submission; but again hostilities broke out between the inhabitants on both sides of the border, and David, though he had been treated with especial favour and honour by Edward, now joined his brother in his attempt to recover the freedom of his nation. Edward took the Welsh in the rear, seizing upon Anglesey with his fleet, and, throwing a bridge over the Menai, near the spot where the greatest wonder of modern architecture has immortalized the name of Stephenson, he led his army across the strait; Llewellyn was defeated and slain; David, who succeeded him, after a vain attempt to collect a second force able to cope with the English monarch, was compelled to surrender; and Edward, looking upon him rather as a rebellious subject (as in one point of view he was, for he had married an English heiress, and had accepted the appointment of seneschal of the king's castles in Wales) than as an independent prince in arms for his hereditary and national rights, brought him to trial as a traitor, caused him to be executed, and annexed the principality to the English crown. One of the finest odes in the English language is founded on a tradition that Edward's fear lest the warlike strains of the Welsh bards should excite their countrymen to fresh insurrections, led him to put them also to death; but though the poetry of Gray has forbidden the tale to die by embalming it in his imperishable verse, it is satisfactory to know that it has no real foundation, and that the

Laughter

fame of Edward is clear from a stain so foreign to his character as the causeless laughter of these unoffending minstrels.

The union of the two countries was a blessing to both. England was freed by it from an enemy ever on the watch to take advantage of any disorders or divisions which might make her even temporarily vulnerable, and Wales received the benefit of the English laws, now steadily and equitably administered; the land was divided into counties, and the government of each placed under regulations similar to those which prevailed in England, while the compliment paid to the nation by Edward conferring the title of prince of Wales on his infant son, who, about the time of his conquest, was born at Caernarvon, tended greatly to reconcile them to the subjection which those classes most interested in the preservation of order and tranquillity soon perceived to be less fruitful of imaginary dishonour than of solid benefit.

The execution of David led to, or, at least, was accompanied by that expansion of the parliamentary constitution of the kingdom to which allusion has already been made. Edward was always studious to conciliate the people by consulting them, especially when he was sure of their concurrence in his views. And on the present occasion he would not decide on the fate of the Welsh Prince by his own authority; but preferred summoning a parliament to judge him. It met at Shrewsbury, apparently on account of the proximity of that town to the Welsh border; and the borough representation was now for the first time placed on an adequate and permanent footing. The number of towns which in the last reign had sent representatives to Leicester's Parliament was probably small. Previous parliaments in this reign had not contained above 40 borough members. But for the Shrewsbury Parliament writs were addressed to 120 boroughs in England, and also to the chief towns in Wales. A separate chamber, apart from that of the barons, was assigned for the deliberations of their representatives; who, from the year 1283 assumed the honoured name of the House of Commons.

The northern frontier of the kingdom had, though scarcely in an equal degree, also suffered from the predatory incursions of the Scots; and Edward, who perceived how important it was to have the government of the whole island consolidated under one head, was equally desirous to annex Scotland to his dominions; and in the fourteenth year of his reign events occurred which gave him hopes of effecting his object in a peaceful manner. Alexander III., who had been married to his sister, died, leaving as his heiress his grandchild Margaret, the daughter of the king of Norway. She was rather younger than the infant prince of Wales; and Edward proposed to the Scottish nobles to contract the two children

to each other. They readily discerned the advantage to their country of being thus incorporated on equal and honourable terms with their more powerful and wealthy neighbour, and there was every prospect of the union so desirable taking place in the happiest manner, when unfortunately the infant princess died on her voyage from Norway to Scotland, and several competitors arose for the succession. It was acknowledged that the true heir was to be found in the descendants of Earl David, brother of William the Lion, who had left three daughters, Devergod, Isabel, and Marjory; and the two claimants, whose pretensions a very slight examination showed to be superior to those of all their rivals, were John Balliol, the grandson of the eldest, and Robert Bruce, the son of the second daughter. Now that the principles of inheritance are better understood, the case would be clear enough in favour of Balliol; but at that time it was questioned by many whether Bruce, as being one degree nearer the parent stock, had not the preferable right; and the point in dispute was referred to the decision of Edward, whose reputation for justice and wisdom stood so high throughout Europe, that the kings of France and Spain had a short time before referred their quarrels to his arbitration, and he had effected a peace between them on terms universally commended for their prudence and equity.

In the case of Scotland, however, he was not quite so disinterested a judge. The kings of England had often claimed, and sometimes extorted from those of Scotland homage not merely for the English counties, which for a time belonged to their crown, but for their whole kingdom. William the Lion, who, as has been already mentioned, was taken prisoner by Henry II., only recovered his liberty by swearing fealty to his conqueror; but Richard, when collecting money for the crusade, had sold his successor a complete release from any such obligation for the future; and in spite of the bold assertion of Edward to the contrary, it seems very unlikely that the weakness of John and of Henry should have been able to reimpose the yoke which had been borne at all times so unwillingly. Edward, however, now required a public acknowledgment of his rights as liege lord of Scotland to decide the controversy, and advanced with a powerful army towards the frontier to enforce his own claim before proceeding to decide on those of the competitors for the succession. The Scottish estates, as their parliament was called, and the rival claimants of the throne, who had come to meet him in a field on the Scotch side of the Tweed, opposite to Norham, evaded such a recognition of his feudal superiority, if, indeed, they did not directly dispute it—but Balliol and Bruce were more under his power than most of the members of the estates. They were both of Norman

blood, inheriting large estates in England, which it was conceivable that Edward might seize; and, though their ancestors had married into the Scotch Royal family, their sympathies were probably more with the English king than with the Scotch people; at all events, there was nothing repugnant to their feelings or principles in an acknowledgment of feudal vassalage, which involved little or no diminution of real authority. It was natural that such men should be more anxious for the success of their own pretensions than for the independence of Scotland, and accordingly both admitted Edward's rights as sovereign lord, and each agreed to do him homage for the kingdom, if the decision should be in his favour. The king appointed commissioners to examine into their respective titles, and, as they reported unanimously in favour of Balliol, he pronounced sentence in accordance with their opinion, and Balliol was crowned king of Scotland.

Hitherto Edward's conduct, even if it were not quite generous thus to take advantage of the defenceless state of a kingdom left without a master, and submitting its affairs voluntarily to his arbitration, had at least not been open to any grave impeachment on the score of justice; for the claim of superiority which he advanced was no new invention of his own, but one which had been enforced on more than one occasion by his predecessors; but he soon showed that it was not his intention to be satisfied with a bare admission of his right, but that he was determined so to exercise it, as to convert it into a real practical supremacy. He compelled Balliol's consent to the abrogation of a condition formerly made, that no Scot should be compelled to try his cause in England either by way of original action or of appeal; and in conformity with this abrogation he not only encouraged appeals in ordinary causes from the Scotch to the English tribunals, but in some disputes relating to the feudal claims and domains of some of the great Scotch nobles, he even summoned Balliol himself before the English Parliament; where it is recorded that "the king of Scotland was obliged to stand at the bar like a private person, and answer an accusation brought against him for denying justice;" such an enforcement of his rights as Lord Paramount showing that his object was not so much to maintain justice, as either to humble Balliol to the condition of an ordinary subject, or else to provoke him to resistance, which might be treated as rebellion.

Balliol had grown very discontented at his treatment without venturing to show his feelings, when disputes arose between France and England out of a quarrel between the Norman fishermen and those from the Cinque Ports. At last, when the Normans, with upwards of 200 ships, sailed up the Channel in bravado, plundering wherever they could find an opportunity, the inhabitants of

Portsmouth and the Cinque Ports fitted out a fleet of eighty vessels, attacked the Normans and defeated them, bringing back almost every French vessel as their prize into the English harbours. Philip at first demanded reparation from Edward as king of England; then, as Edward seemed inclined to defend the conduct of the English sailors, he summoned him to appear in his courts to answer to the charge, as his vassal for Aquitaine and Guienne, and, on his refusal to appear, declared those duchies to be forfeited, and prepared to take possession of them. In the negotiations which ensued, it was agreed that Edward should marry Margaret, Philip's sister, and that the issue of that marriage should inherit Edward's French dominions. In his eagerness to further this arrangement, Edward consented to make a temporary cession of Guienne, by way of saving Philip's honour, lest he should appear to have submitted to the injury inflicted on his sailors without exacting any redress, and Philip solemnly promised to restore it at the end of forty days. But as soon as he had got possession of it, he refused to perform his part of the agreement, and Edward, enraged at having been thus outwitted, declared war against him, forming alliances with many of the sovereign princes on the French frontier, and sending a formidable army into Guienne, which, however, performed no exploit of importance. The war was continued slowly and feebly for eight years, when, by the mediation of pope Boniface, peace was made in 1303, and Edward recovered the provinces which it had been so unjustly attempted to wrest from him.

But this war, when it first broke out, had appeared to Balliol likely to cause so much embarrassment to the king of England, as to afford himself an opportunity of shaking off a vassalage so ignominious and so irksome. Accordingly he made overtures to Philip, and concluded a defensive and offensive alliance with France, one of the terms of which was, that his eldest son should marry Philip's niece. And this was the beginning of that close union which so long bound the two kingdoms together, till the death of the unfortunate Mary, and which caused such frequent troubles to England during its continuance. Edward, however, was not of a temper to be daunted by the number of his enemies; but, regarding the hostility of Scotland as of greater importance than the war with France, the moment he received information of the steps thus taken by Balliol, he marched towards the Scottish borders, at the head of a powerful army, to reduce him to submission. On the frontier he received an embassy from Balliol, who had obtained from pope Celestine absolution from his oath of fealty, renouncing allegiance to him; but, though the Scottish monarch had collected a force more numerous than the English

army, it was not sufficiently at hand to protect him from the consequence of this hasty defiance; Edward's reply to which was couched in actions rather than words. He instantly stormed Berwick, and put the garrison to the sword; and then sent Warrenne, earl of Surrey (a title terrible to the Scots in future times, as linked with the greatest overthrow they ever experienced) with 12,000 men to besiege Dunbar. The whole Scotch army, amounting to upwards of 40,000 men, marched to the relief of that important fortress. They occupied the hills surrounding the town, and, with ordinary prudence, might have reduced the English to great difficulties; but, deceived by a retrograde movement on his part, they descended from their commanding position, (they repeated the same blunder, on the same ground, with a similar disastrous result, nearly 400 years afterwards,) and engaged Surrey ^{A.D. 1294.} in the plain, where the superior equipment and discipline of his troops more than counterbalanced the inequality of numbers. They were defeated with great slaughter, and this victory over their only army left the whole kingdom at the mercy of the conqueror. The strongest fortresses and the most important towns at once submitted to him; and Balliol himself signed an acknowledgment that by his renunciation of fealty to his liege lord he had justly forfeited his kingdom. His submission was followed by that of the Scottish parliament and nobility, and they all successively did homage to Edward, who returned to England, taking with him Balliol as his prisoner, and carrying off also the regalia of Scotland, and an ancient stone on which the kings had been used to sit at their coronation, and to which popular superstition and legendary prophecies had long attached a mysterious reverence as the palladium of the monarchy.* In London, Balliol was treated with as much indulgence as was compatible with his safe detention; and after a couple of years' confinement, he was allowed to retire to his estates in Normandy, where he died in the early part of the next century, not quite two years before Edward himself.

* It now forms the support of Edward the Confessor's chair, in which the sovereign sits at his coronation; so that the prophecy, which attached dominion to the place where it should be kept, is still fulfilled.

CHAPTER XIV.

EDWARD I. (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1296
1307.

EDWARD was now for a while undisputed sovereign of the whole island. Many of the chief Scottish nobles had joined him even before Balliol's submission; nor was this conduct unnatural; for, though possessed of Scottish estates and Scottish titles, they could trace their first connexion with the country to a very recent date. They nearly all, like Bruce and Balliol themselves, were descended from Norman barons, in only the third or fourth generation. Many of them had lands also in England, to which kingdom they therefore owed nearly equal allegiance; and, when the two countries were divided by hostilities, their adherence to either was probably determined more by the character of the rival sovereigns than by any other consideration. They, therefore, willingly acquiesced in what, to them, was scarcely a foreign yoke; but the less powerful and aristocratic classes, the native Scotch, bore their subjection to England with an impatience which the lawless conduct of the English garrisons, and the insolent rapacity of Cressingham, the English treasurer, did not tend to diminish. They found a leader in William Wallace, a man of gentle birth, but of too moderate fortune to be placed in the way of royal favour or royal notice; and who was, moreover, united to the party hostile to England by his private misfortunes, having been declared an outlaw for having killed an Englishman in some casual fray. Being greatly distinguished for unusual personal strength and prowess, he had no difficulty in collecting round him a band of men discontented and desperate like himself, and he was joined by the chief of the house of Douglas, who had been taken prisoner by Edward at Berwick, but had been ransomed, and who now brought his followers, and many also of the smaller barons who were influenced by his name, to range themselves under the standard of their country.

Edward himself was in Flanders, where his ally, the earl of that country, had been defeated by Philip, when he received the news of this unexpected insurrection. It had been his intention to join the earl in person, at the beginning of the war, which he had persuaded him to commence, but he had been for a time detained in England by the necessity of putting his own affairs on a sound

footing; in 1295, exasperated by the loss of Guienne, and anticipating, not unwillingly, that outbreak of the Scots, which resulted in the deposition of Balliol, he assembled a parliament, summoning knights of the shire, and burgesses from all the chief towns in each county, giving, in his proclamation issued for that purpose, the reason "that it is a most equitable rule that what concerns all should be approved of by all, and that common dangers should be repelled by united efforts." It was on this occasion that the commons first occupied a separate chamber. They were, as yet, hardly recognized as having a right to interfere in the general legislation of the kingdom; their province was rather considered to be the deliberating, on the part of their constituents, on the taxes which the king wished to impose, and devising means to furnish him with the supplies which he required. But it soon became a custom for them to append to their grants petitions for the redress of any grievances of which they had cause to complain; and it was an easy step from complaining of evils to consult on the means of remedying or preventing them. They now willingly granted him what he demanded, but his operations were so extensive that he soon found his necessities exceed the grants which he had requested; and he endeavoured to supply the deficiency by his own arbitrary power. He first laid a heavy tax on the clergy; the pope prohibited them from paying it; but Edward, with the formal sanction of the lay peers, outlawed all who refused payment, and soon reduced them to obedience; while the sole result of their attempted resistance was to diminish the respect entertained for their body by the people, who had seen the pope's prohibitions and most violent menaces wholly disregarded, and the priests themselves, in many instances, treated with a contumely which made them objects rather of ridicule than of pity. But when he turned from the clergy to the laity he had less success. He had always refused or evaded any confirmation of the Great Charter, and had given many indications of an inclination to disregard its provisions; and he now proceeded to violate the most essential of them by imposing heavy taxes by his own authority, especially one on the exportation of wool, at that time the most important article of commerce in the kingdom. He adopted equally illegal measures to increase his army, requiring the small landowners, whose tenure obliged them to no such service, to join the force which he was collecting for the invasion of France. The merchants and freeholders were now as discontented as the clergy, and they found a more effectual support than the pope in the most powerful nobles of the kingdom. Bohun, earl of Hereford, the constable, and Bigod, earl of Norfolk, the marshal of England, worthy successors of those iron barons, who had won the liberties

eir country on Rannimede, now showed themselves as resolute
 sist him, valiant, powerful, and wise as he was, as their
 stors had been to check the tyranny of his cowardly, helpless,
 despicable grandfather. No Plantagenet was ever vary-
 nt of contradiction, and Edward's fury rose to such a height
 he threatened the constable to hang him if he persisted in his
 gard of his commands. But the steadiness and union of the
 s compelled him to pause in his course. He had that true
 manlike wisdom which knows how to recede from un-
 intable pretensions with a good grace. He assembled the
 s, laid before them a plain statement of the necessities which
 driven him to the measures of which they complained, pro-
 l to redress the grievances which gave dissatisfaction, and at-
 though not without a severe struggle, he was induced to
 m the Great Charter in every particular, and even to give
 er guarantees for its observance than had hitherto been
 ded. There is no way in which the foreign wars of our early
 eigns were so beneficial to the nation as in making them
 ident on their people for their supplies, and so forcing them
 nciliate their affections by the acknowledgment of their rights
 he confirmation of their liberties.

r a while Wallace contented himself with improving the
 line and raising the spirits of his men by trivial skirmishes
 attempts on inconsiderable places, in which he was so success-
 s to acquire a renown which rapidly augmented his army ;
 ; was still far inferior to the host with which Surrey, whom
 rd had left as governor of Scotland, overtook him at Stirling.
 at time the Forth was spanned by a bridge so narrow as
 ely to admit more than two persons abreast ; behind this
 e Wallace stationed his army, and Surrey, contrary to his
 judgment, was persuaded by the unskilful impetuosity of
 ingham to cross it to attack the enemy ; but only a small
 on of his army had reached the other side of the river when
 s attacked and overpowered by Wallace ; the bridge broke
 : the weight of the squadrons pressing across it to assist their
 ades ; thousands were drowned in the river, thousands were
 by the Scots, who gave no quarter, (nor is this any particular
 ach to them, for the age was merciless in its warfare, and the
 chivalrous and magnanimous princes felt themselves under
 igation to spare a conquered foe,) and Surrey fled almost
 accompanied to England to announce his own defeat and the
 f the kingdom entrusted to him.

e joy inspired by this victory was such that an assembly of
 cottish states unanimously appointed Wallace guardian of the
 lom, but he did not allow it to buoy him up to an undue

confidence in the resources of himself and his countrymen to resist the exertions which all who knew Edward's character doubted not that he would make to repair the disaster which had befallen his arms. He hastened from Flanders, and crossed the borders at the head of the most powerful army that had ever yet been seen in Scotland.* Wallace retired, laying waste the country in his retreat, in order to embarrass the invader by a scarcity of provisions; but Edward's resolution triumphed over every difficulty and every obstacle. Sleeping on the ground like a common soldier, with his horse picketed beside him, he received a kick from the animal, which is said to have broken some of his ribs, but still he pressed onwards, and on the 22nd of July, 1298, found his enemies in his front, drawn up in battle array on Falkirk Moor.

The Scotch army was far less numerous than the English; but proud of the recent triumph at Stirling, and full of confidence in their leader, they clamoured loudly to be led to battle. His reply was brief, but well addressed to men who held the independence of their country in their right hands. "I have brought you to the ring, dance as you can." Tactical skill in those days was usually shown rather in making judicious dispositions before the conflict than in the handling of troops while the battle was actually raging. And of his possession of this qualification of a general, Wallace now gave such admirable proof that his arrangements on this occasion are quoted by the great Scottish historian of the present day† as an anticipation of "the square to receive cavalry," which in recent wars our generals have so often found invincible. To encounter the overwhelming force of the English horsemen, he distributed his foot soldiers into circular clumps; the outer ranks of which knelt down and held their lances forward to receive the horses in their charge; while the bowmen stood in the centre and shot over their heads. The spirit of the bishop of Beauvais still lingered among the English clergy; for one division of the cavalry which commenced the attack was led by the bishop of Durham. For a while Wallace's tactics were successful. The Scottish spearmen received the charge with gallant firmness; but the knights behaved so ill as greatly to countenance the imputation which common rumour made against them, of having been tampered with by Edward, and having betrayed their gallant leader from jealousy of being commanded by one of inferior birth and rank to themselves; and gradually the repeated onsets of the English horse wore out the steadiness or the strength of the infantry. At last

* It is said to have amounted to 7,500 mounted men-at-arms, and 80,000 foot soldiers. Wallace's army is understood not to have exceeded 30,000, of whom not more than 1,000 were cavalry.

† Burton, *History of Scotland*, II., 303.

A. D. 1302.

they were all broken and routed; the destruction of the Scottish host was almost complete, and for the third time within a very few years the fate of Scotland was decided by a single battle.

Edward was preparing to follow up his blow, when he received a message from pope Boniface, claiming Scotland as a dependency of the see of Rome, because it had been converted to Christianity by the bones of St. Andrew, the brother of St. Peter, and desiring Edward to send proctors to Rome to discuss his claim to the throne of that kingdom before himself as judge. King and parliament alike scorned to submit to such insolent dictation; but a truce made with France, in which Scotland, as one of the allies of France, was included, gave her a short breathing time. Wallace resigned the guardianship of the kingdom, and is believed to have withdrawn to France for a while; and sir John Comyn, with Bruce, the grandson of Balliol's competitor, and the bishop of St. Andrew's, were appointed to succeed him; and, on the renewal of hostilities in 1302, Comyn and sir Simon Frazer defeated a small English force under sir John Segrave at Roslin, and again Edward returned to conduct the war in person. Success, wherever he appeared, was so invariable, that the guardians had no heart to prolong an apparently hopeless contest, and submitted. On many of the leading nobles the king was contented to impose penalties of no great severity; but Wallace, who had returned from France, was too formidable from his talents and his former achievements to be so leniently dealt with. He was seized in Glasgow by the governor of Dumbarton Castle, and was at once removed to London for trial. It is said that he had formerly boasted that he would wear a crown in England; and in singular mockery of this boast, a crown of laurel was placed upon his head while before his judges. The evidence in support of the charges brought against him has not been preserved; but he was convicted of having worked to bring Scotland under the authority of the king of France, whom the Scotch were to assist in the destruction of England, and was condemned to the penalties of treason, which in August, 1305, were inflicted on him on Tower Hill.

After having been the object of universal admiration and pity for 500 years, an eminent writer* of the present century has attempted to show that he was neither the good nor the great man that the exaggeration of the ancient chroniclers has invariably represented, and the fondness of his countrymen has implicitly believed him. It may seem a sufficient reply to such a perverse estimation of him, that if that unanimous praise of his character, and that no less unanimous attachment to his memory fail to prove the justice of the common opinion respecting him, the hostility mani-

* Dr. Lingard. See c. xiv of his history.

tested by Edward, only to be appeased by his death, is an undeniable evidence of its truth. A contemptible foe could neither have been feared nor hated by the great king; but he felt that, while Wallace lived, the success of his schemes for the subjection of Scotland was precarious; and he paid involuntary homage to his greatness in the relentless firmness with which he sought for his blood. He knew well what his courage and love of freedom while alive might effect. He could not divine that his example when dead would rouse a still greater hero to imitate his bright example, of equal valour and prowess, of still greater skill and wisdom, and by his chivalrous character and mighty exploits, equally worthy to be admired, and loved, and trusted by his countrymen. It is no digression to dwell on the virtues of these men of whom human nature itself may well be proud. Though they warred against England, we cannot look upon them as enemies; at all events, since the union of the two kingdoms has made us a united people, there is no Englishman who may not own a national pride in the purity of purpose, the honest patriotism of Wallace, and feel his heart glow with all a countryman's exultation in the heroic constancy, the unsullied triumphs of Scotland's champion and deliverer, the kingly victor of Bannockburn.

Edward now looked upon Scotland as wholly subdued, and proceeded to form a constitution for his new kingdom, and to make careful provision for that uniformity of laws and strict administration of justice which he had established in his hereditary dominions. But soon he was unexpectedly aroused from his dream of tranquillity by the rising up of a more formidable enemy than ever he had encountered,

About the same time that Wallace was executed in London, Balliol died in France; his son showed no inclination to return to Scotland; and, even if he had returned, he would have been disabled by his father's forfeiture from advancing any pretension to the Scottish Crown, the legal claim to which now clearly devolved on the Bruces; and the new head of that house was possessed of ambition and abilities calculated to enable him to prosecute that claim with a fair chance of success. He had been a youth of 17 when the throne was adjudged to Balliol. Three years afterwards his grandfather, Balliol's competitor died: and his own father, who died just before Wallace's execution, had resided chiefly in England, taking no part in the affairs of Scotland. He himself, during the struggles of Wallace, had made his submission to Edward, and had subsequently passed his time chiefly at the English Court, in the enjoyment of no small share of the king's favour. But he did not forget his claim to the Scotch crown, which, by the decision of Edward himself, was now superior to

A.D. 1306.

that of any rival, and soon after his father's death he began to take steps to form a party to support him in the prosecution of his rights. The aid which he chiefly sought was that of Comyn, lord of Badenoch, himself, as the descendant of earl David's third daughter Marjory, one of the original competitors for the throne. But Comyn betrayed his proposals to Edward; and it was only by the timely hint of a friend, who, not daring to give him written intelligence, sent him a piece of money, and a pair of spurs, and to his own address in baffling pursuit, by having his horse's shoes reversed, that he was able to escape in safety from England before the orders of Edward to secure him could be executed. On his arrival in Scotland he had an interview with Comyn. The church of the Minorites, at Dumfries, was the place chosen, as each had but too much reason not to trust himself in the power of the other. But the holy character of the place could not restrain the disappointed irritation of the one noble, nor the indignant exasperation of the other. Comyn gave Bruce the lie, and Bruce wounded him with his dagger. Horror-struck at his sacrilegious act, he rushed from the church, telling his friend Kirkpatrick, who stood at the door awaiting the issue of the conference, that he doubted he had slain Comyn. "Do you doubt?" said Kirkpatrick; "I make sure:" and, before Bruce could prevent him, he rushed into the chapel and completed the bloody deed. The English justiciaries, who were holding their assize at Dumfries at the time, alarmed at the outrage, barricaded the hall in which they sat, but Bruce compelled them to surrender, and dismissed them from the kingdom.

After these violent actions there was no safety for him as a subject of Edward; his only chance of security was as an independent sovereign. Accordingly, he claimed the throne for which he had now no competitor; and many of the most valiant, if not the most powerful of the nobles, eagerly supported him. To give due solemnity to his assumption of the royal dignity he resolved to be crowned at Scone; and as the earl of Fife, whose hereditary privilege it was to place the crown on his sovereign's head, refused to attend, his sister, the countess of Buchan, took his place, and, on the 27th of March, 1306, placed a narrow circlet of gold (for Edward had carried off the ancient crown of the kingdom) on the head of the new monarch.

The murder of Comyn, and the expulsion of the justices, had kindled Edward's anger, which was exasperated still further by the news of this bold act of defiance. He sent forward one of his most distinguished soldiers, Aymer de Valence, to keep Bruce and his rebellious adherents in check; and, to give a more imposing air to his own preparations, held a great festival in the Temple

in London, at which he knighted the prince of Wales, and 270 of his companions. At the banquet after the ceremony, according to the singular fashion of the times, two swans, in nets of gold, were placed upon the table. The aged king vowed to God, and to the swans, that he would revenge the death of Comyn upon his rebellious murderers; and the prince swore, with equal solemnity, that he would not sleep two nights in the same place till he had accomplished his and his father's vow.

Bruce's first attempts in support of his new dignity were very unsuccessful. In a skirmish near Perth with De Valence he was defeated, and only saved from death or captivity by the valour of his brother-in-law Seaton; and at last he was forced to seek a refuge during the winter in a small island on the Irish coast, while many of his most trusted adherents and nearest relatives fell into the power of Edward, who executed all the men without mercy as traitors and rebels, and threw many of the women into prison, among whom were Bruce's wife and daughter, and the countess of Buchan. There seemed likely to be too much truth in the forebodings of Bruce's wife, who had expressed her fears at his coronation, that he would be but a summer king. But though to the attack which Edward was preparing for him were added the terrors of papal excommunication, fulminated against him for the sacrilegious murder of Comyn, he was not daunted. It is said, (in an account of so romantic a career the most romantic incident can hardly be out of place,) that one night, as he was revolving in his mind the disasters which had befallen him and his adherents, and the chances of future success, his attention was attracted to a spider, who was making strenuous efforts to attach its web to a beam apparently out of its reach. Six times the persevering insect fell to the ground, but at the seventh attempt it had more success, it reached the beam, and completed its web in safety. Bruce recollected that he, too, had met with six failures, and, as the attempt which he was meditating would be the seventh, he looked on the spider's triumph as an omen of his own. Even in ages less infected by superstition omens have often begotten success by the confidence which they have inspired, and have perhaps still more frequently obtained with the populace the credit really due to wisdom and valour; so that it is not strange, since history has preserved few more brilliant series of actions than those which marked Bruce's subsequent career, that the little insect who thus heralded them to his own adventurous mind was long regarded with reverence by his nation, with affection by his posterity.

With the return of spring he too returned to Scotland, gained the advantage in several trifling skirmishes, recovered some places of small importance, and in May avenged the defeat he had sus-

A.D. 1307.

tained from De Valence in the preceding year by completely routing him on Loudon Hill.

Edward perceived that his lieutenants were unequal to the contest, and was hastening towards the borders to assume the command of his army himself : when the fatigue of the journey, joined to the anxiety caused by Bruce's success, brought on a fever which, in his enfeebled state, speedily proved fatal ; and on the 7th of July he died, near Carlisle, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign.

Among the rulers of mankind who have won for themselves a conspicuous and honourable place in the history of their country Edward has no superior, and scarcely an equal. Personal prowess, which in the other heroes of that unlettered age makes up the greater part, or the whole of their renown, though so eminent in him that no knight in Europe could encounter him on equal terms, was yet in him so overshadowed by more valuable qualities as to be scarcely entitled to notice, and the invincible knight is lost in the consummate general, the wise lawgiver, the far-sighted statesman. It is not reasonable to judge by the same standard the private individual secure in peaceful retirement, and the monarch surrounded by greater temptations and burdened with heavier responsibilities. It must be admitted that Edward was ambitious, and that in the pursuit of the objects of his ambition he did not always regard either the strict requirements of justice, or the gentler voice of the equally kingly quality of mercy : but it was no personal vulgar ambition that prompted his attacks upon Wales and Scotland, but a judicious perception of the advantages to be derived, not by England alone, but by the invaded countries also from their union into one kingdom. He was ambitious, not so much of being the conqueror as of being the benefactor of the whole island ; and the instant that his supremacy was acknowledged he began to impart to his new territories the blessings which his legislative wisdom had already secured to his hereditary kingdom. It may be added that no man's ambition was ever more judiciously regulated by his power ; he failed in nothing that he undertook. He so entirely subdued Scotland once that he was acknowledged as its king, and its subsequent re-establishment as an independent state was owing to his death, and to the weakness of his successor ; while the desirableness of the conquest for both countries is amply proved by the benefits that have accrued to both since, and, very greatly, in consequence of their union. As a king he was not disinclined to extend his power beyond the limits which the constitution, now beginning to be understood and properly valued, permitted ; but his statesmanlike wisdom taught him moderation even in his prosecution of this design, and no one ever receded with more dignity

from pretensions which he found it perilous to enforce, or ever showed more clearly by his subsequent conduct that his renunciation of them was complete. Though there had been before his time, as we have seen, a parliament containing representatives from the towns, yet he may more justly than any one else be considered the real founder of our parliament, as having been the first to proclaim the right of every class to be consulted on the common interests, and not to be taxed without their own consent: a declaration which evinces sagacity to discern the inevitable course of events, and a resolute liberality of policy in thus binding himself and his successors for ever to an observance of rights so formally acknowledged, which proves him far in advance of his age, not only as a statesman, but as a patriot. The object for which Hampden contended was no other than the practical application of the principle laid down by this far-sighted and benevolent monarch. Kings are subjected to a more rigid tribunal than ordinary men from the fact of their conspicuous position making all their actions both more notorious and more important; and we have no right to expect that faultlessness in a sovereign which we know it to be vain to look for in others; but as long as the equitable rule prevails of balancing men's virtues against their faults, and of looking at the general results of their conduct, so long will the splendid and universal abilities of Edward the First, and the great and lasting benefit which his country has derived from them secure him a leading, if not the very first place among those monarchs who have left an example to be revered by their countrymen and imitated by their successors.

CHAPTER XV.

EDWARD II.

A.D.
1307
1327.



EDWARD the Second at his accession was twenty-three years of age; his father had early endeavoured to teach him the principles and theory of government by leaving him as the nominal regent of the kingdom during his absence in Flanders, and giving him the wisest statesmen in the kingdom for his councillors and guides. Unhappily the young prince was both giddy and obstinate; preferring the society of those worthless parasites, of whom a court is too fruitful, to their graver but necessary lessons; and his first actions as a

A.D. 1309.

king showed that his increased responsibilities had not taught him any greater degree of reflection or resolution. While a boy he had formed an attachment for a young Gascon, named Piers Gaveston, a man possessed of many of the accomplishments of the age, but thoughtless and unprincipled; and his father saw so clearly the extent and the mischievous effect of his favourite's influence over him that he banished him from the kingdom; and on his deathbed the last injunctions which he laid upon his son were to carry his bones with him into Scotland, never to rest till he had subdued it, and never to recall Gaveston.

Both these commands were disregarded. Edward did indeed advance with his army a short distance into Scotland, but retired again without striking a blow; and, having dismissed all his father's most trusted ministers, he recalled Gaveston, presented him with the greater part of the treasure which the old king had bequeathed for the support of a body of knights still warring against the infidels in the Holy Land, gave him his own niece in marriage and the earldom of Cornwall, which had hitherto been reserved for the royal family; and, when he himself went over to France to marry the princess Isabella, accounted the most beautiful woman of her time, he passed over all the native nobles, and appointed him guardian of the kingdom.

Gaveston did not bear his honours with meekness, but, encouraged by the submissiveness with which his master bore his imperious domination, he treated the barons with such insolence that they soon conspired against him, compelled the king to banish him, and made Gaveston himself take an oath never to return to the kingdom. They were pacified for a moment by their triumph; but their hostility was reawakened more fiercely than ever when they found that he had been appointed viceroy of Ireland, and when shortly afterwards his weak master procured for him from the pope a dispensation from the oath which he had taken never to return, recalled him, and went to Chester to meet him, showing the most indecent and childish joy at the recovery of his favourite.

Gaveston was not without abilities: he had repressed a rising insurrection in Ireland with resolution and success: but he had not learnt prudence or moderation, and taking his recall as a proof, not of the weakness of the king, but of the impotence of his enemies, he carried his arrogance to such a pitch that they again rose, wrested all the authority of the kingdom out of Edward's hands, compelled him to consent to a string of ordinances framed by a committee of their own appointment, banished Gaveston a second time, and, when the king a second time recalled him, they rose in arms, besieged both king and favourite, seized the latter, and put him to death close to Guy's Cliff, in Warwickshire. Edward,

A.D. 1314.

June 12th. 1312. furious at his loss, assembled an army to revenge him, and solicited the aid of the king of France for the same purpose ; but his more prudent kinsman counselled peace, and the birth of an heir gratified him so much that for a time he forgot his indignation against his barons, admitted their apologies, and granted them a general pardon.

It was more than ever necessary for all parties in England to be united, if they would not see Scotland wholly wrested from their grasp. By a happy mixture of enterprise and prudence Bruce had gradually recovered nearly all the strongholds won by the first Edward and his generals, and his brother, Edward Bruce, was besieging Stirling, the governor of which town had agreed to surrender it, if he were not relieved by the day of St. John the Baptist, in 1314. To preserve this, almost the last fortress remaining to him in the whole country, the king of England collected a vast army, the largest perhaps that ever was ranged at one time beneath the British banner, and hastened to the aid of his beleaguered general.

Bruce had been greatly concerned at the agreement which his brother had made with the governor of Stirling, as giving time for collection of this vast armament, which it was impossible for him to equal. His utmost exertions could not assemble more than one-third of their numbers to encounter the English ; and the inferiority of their equipments was greater than even the disparity of numbers. Of cavalry he had scarcely any, and the Scottish cross-bowmen were no match for the southern archers, each of whom, according to the national proverb, carried the lives of twenty-four Scots in his belt. Still he did not despair. He had learnt from the late battle of Contray, where the French chivalry had fled before the Flemings, that infantry could resist cavalry with success, and he prepared to aid his Carrick spearmen, on whom he placed his main reliance, by all the resources of military skill. His right flank was protected by the brook or burn of Bannock, which has given its name to the field of battle. Some of the ground in front was unfavourable for the hostile cavalry, being marshy and full of trees ; and, where it offered a firmer footing, he caused deep pits to be dug, till the plain was like a honeycomb, and covered the surface of these pits with wattles and turf, strong enough to bear infantry, but sure to give way under the weight of a mailed horseman. On the 23rd of June the English host came in sight of the scanty battalions of the enemy. The morrow was the day appointed to decide the fate of Stirling ; but on that evening more than one skirmish took place, which gave token to both parties of the event of the coming day. Clifford, with 800 horse, was despatched to throw a reinforcement into Stirling, but was beaten back by Randolph, with scarce 200

A.D. 1314.

infantry, so speedily that Douglas, who, when he saw his little band surrounded, had extorted from Bruce permission to go to his rescue, while yet at a distance saw him in possession of the field, and checked his men that he might not appear a sharer in a triumph to which he had not contributed. More famous still was the encounter in which Bruce himself was concerned, Clad in complete steel, but with no weapon save a battle-axe, he was riding in front of his men on a small palfrey, when an English knight of high reputation, sir Henry de Bohun, thinking he saw an opportunity of terminating the war at one blow, couched his lance and spurred his war-horse to the charge to crush the king by his superior weight. The king seemed prepared to abide the onset; but, as the knight came up, he turned his palfrey aside, avoided the blow aimed at him, and, rising in his stirrups, struck his assailant so heavy a stroke with his battle-axe, that it shivered in his hand as De Bohun fell dead at his feet. The English were as dismayed as the Scots were encouraged by the sight; and with these feelings both sides prepared for the coming contest. The next morning, as the English were advancing to the attack, Edward, who was at the head of his men, saw the Scottish battalions with one consent bend their knees to the ground. "See, Umfraville," said he to one of his most renowned knights, "the rebels yield; they kneel for mercy." It is from Heaven," replied Umfraville, "and not from your grace that they crave it; on that field they will conquer or die." And in truth it was to Heaven that they knelt, as the abbot Maurice walked barefooted along their line, giving his solemn benediction to them, and offering earnest prayers for their success. The national poet,* whose chosen theme is the glory of the Bruce, represents him as encouraging his men to put forth all their might by the reflection that the right was on their side, and that for the right God Himself would fight with them; that if they gained the victory, so great would be the booty, that the poorest of them all should be a rich man for the rest of his life. Above all, that they were about to strive not for their own lives only, but for their children, their wives, their freedom, and

* Barbour's Bruce, xii. p. 131.

"We for our lyvys,
And for our childre, and for our wyvis,
And for our fredome, and for our land,
As strengeit into battle stand."

The classical reader will compare the exhortation to the Greeks before the battle of Salamis, as recorded by another poet.

ὦ παῖδες Ἕλληνας ἴτε,
ἰλευθιμότες πατρὶδ', ἰλευθιμότες δὴ
παῖδας, γυναικας, ἑὼν τε πατρίων ἰδη,
θάνατος τε ἀπογίνων ἢν ὑμῖν πάντων ἀγών.

It is hardly likely that the Scottish bard had read Æschylus, but patriotism and courage belong to every country, and suggest similar topics to all brave men.

their native land. And doubtless the ideas thus poetically put into their king's mouth occurred to many a thoughtful mind, fired many a gallant spirit, and nerved many a mighty hand. Onward came the English; and, when they arrived within bowshot, the archers sent forth such a storm of arrows as seemed likely to decide the strife at once, when Edward Bruce and the marshal sir Robert Keith, at the head of the small body of cavalry who had been reserved for that purpose, charged them on the flank, and threw them into disorder. They were neither accustomed to, nor equipped for, close combat; and were slaughtered almost without resistance. The knights and men-at-arms sought to repair the disaster by making a furious attack on the Scottish front, but the undermined ground gave way beneath their advance, and man and horse floundered helplessly among the pitfalls prepared for their reception. Still the English leaders stubbornly maintained the fight; Gloucester, and Pembroke, and Clifford, and De Argentine, and Edward himself, among whose faults cowardice had no place, though surprised, still undismayed, were exerting themselves to rally their forces, when the Scottish camp-followers, whom Bruce had sent with the baggage to the rear, unable to restrain their anxiety, appeared on the rising ground, still called the Gillies' (or the Servants') Hill, and, at the distance, bore the appearance of a strong reinforcement. At the sight of them a panic seized nearly the whole of the English army; they fled in disorder, and no longer made any resistance to their enemies, who pursued them with relentless slaughter. Numbers perished by the sword; numbers in blind terror sought to flee across the Forth, and were drowned in its waters, till the amount of the slain surpassed that of the whole Scottish army. Edward fled to Dunbar, closely pursued by Douglas, and from thence escaped to England, where still more terrible disasters, famine, and pestilence were beginning to cause great ravages among his subjects.

Meantime Bruce, now fully established on his throne, recovered Berwick, the last Scotch town remaining in Edward's hands, overran the English frontier, and ravaged all the northern counties till the war between the two kingdoms was terminated for a time by a truce for two years.

Edward, with a reputation and authority greatly damaged by his defeat, again provoked the indignation of his barons by his selection of another favourite, Hugh le Despenser, in no respect more acceptable to them than Gaveston, and more rapacious and oppressive than that unfortunate man. The barons again took arms, and compelled the king to banish both him and his father, an aged knight, nearly ninety years of age; but they became so elated by their success as to treat, not only the king, but the queen

A.D. 1322.

also with an insolence that raised a feeling in Edward's favour, of which he took advantage to recall the Despensers, and to levy an army with which he attacked them. Many submitted and surrendered their castles to him; but Lancaster, the most powerful of the whole body, and nearly connected with the royal family, collected a force to resist him; he was, however, defeated and taken prisoner, and Edward, who had never forgotten the principal share which he had borne in Gaveston's execution, put him to death with the same indignities that had been inflicted on his former favourite.

The unhappy king, however, had an enemy nearer home. His wife's affections had been alienated from him, and as her brother, the new king of France, Charles le Bel, summoned him to that country to do homage for Guienne, she persuaded him to allow her to cross the Channel to negotiate with her brother, and to resign Guienne to the prince of Wales, a boy of thirteen, who might go and do homage to his uncle with less danger than Edward apprehended to himself. As soon as she reached France she was joined by Roger Mortimer, a young Welsh baron, of whom she had become enamoured, and by his means she commenced a correspondence with the disaffected barons. After a time she declared open war against her husband, and in September, 1326, landed in Suffolk at the head of 3000 men, declaring that her object was to deliver England from the tyranny of the Despensers. Edward, after trying in vain to raise an army, fled with his favourites, and endeavoured to cross the sea to Ireland, but the wind was unfavourable; both the Despensers were taken prisoners and executed; and, in a parliament summoned by Isabella to meet at Westminster, Jan., the king was formally deposed; his son was proclaimed in 1327. his stead, and shortly after crowned at Westminster. But the captive condition of Edward began to create a sympathy for his cause, which was heightened by men's disgust at the unnatural conduct of his faithless wife, and the insolence of Mortimer, who now ruled the kingdom without a rival. There seemed a danger of the reaction ripening into a plot for his deliverance, and the queen, to complete her guilt, resolved to take the surest measures to prevent a result which she had so much reason to dread. As the earl of Leicester, to whose custody Edward had originally been committed, treated him with kindness, he was transferred to the care of two men, named Gurney and Maltravers, who, though of knightly rank, were of a cruel, ruffianly nature; they conducted him to Berkeley Castle, and, after trying in vain the effect of every description of ill treatment, insult, and privation, murdered 1327. him in the most inhuman manner. He was in the forty-third year of his age; and, besides his successor, Edward, he left another

son, John, who died young, and two daughters, one of whom, Jane, was afterwards married to David Bruce, the king of Scotland, and the other to the count of Gueldres.

Few kings have ever reigned more unhappily, none have died so miserably as Edward II. ; and though he was neither licentious nor cruel, there is no one whose misfortunes may be more clearly traced to his own conduct. He succeeded to a throne which all his people were disposed to venerate from a recollection of his great father ; but he first alienated their affections by his exclusive partiality for worthless favourites, and then excited their contempt by the weak-minded obstinacy with which he persevered in it, and the faithlessness with which he broke all his promises to discard them. The disaster at Bannockburn impaired his authority ; but severe as the loss sustained in that defeat was, it was not too great to retrieve, and would only have stimulated his father or his son to a vigorous resolution to avenge it ; but he had gradually become incapable of a manly effort, and the expeditions which he made against the Scots in the latter part of his reign only brought him additional discomfiture and dishonour. In an age like our own, when the affairs of government are carried on by responsible ministers, the personal character of the sovereign is of less importance, and indeed is often not so easily nor so clearly ascertained ; but in the rude times of which we are speaking, when the king was his own minister and his own general, every feeling and action of his was carefully scrutinized, and the folly and imbecility which might only have moved ridicule, or perhaps pity in a private individual, became in the monarch a source of misery to his subjects, of degradation and destruction to himself.

CHAPTER XVI.

EDWARD III.

A.D.
1327
1341.



T was in September, 1327, that Edward II. was murdered, but he had ceased to reign in the beginning of the same year. His son and successor was only fourteen years of age, and a council of regency was appointed, the earl of Lancaster being named as his especial guardian, but the real power of the kingdom was in the hands of his mother and her paramour Mortimer. He had hardly been crowned when war broke out with Scotland. Bruce had availr^d

A.D. 1328.

himself of the weakness of England, produced by the divisions of the late reign, and had become so powerful that at last his authority as king had been fully recognized by Edward II., and by the pope ; and the foundations of his power were greatly strengthened by the birth of a son, which took place a few years earlier than the time of which we are speaking. Now, thinking that the minority of the young king, and the increasing unpopularity of Isabella and Mortimer, presented a favourable opportunity, he renewed his quarrel with England on somewhat trivial grounds, and sent Randolph and Douglas with a considerable army to ravage the northern counties. The regent assembled a force of double their numbers to repel them, of which Edward himself took command ; but so rapid were the motions of the Scots, that for a long time it was impossible to overtake them, or even to ascertain where they were, though they were desolating the whole district with fire and sword ; till at last Edward offered knighthood and a large annuity to any one who should bring him word where the enemy was to be found, and the Scottish leaders released a prisoner to bear him the wished-for information. He found them on the banks of the Wear, posted so strongly that, in spite of his superiority of numbers, he could not venture to attack them ; and for many days he pursued them without ever finding an opportunity of bringing them to a battle. He sent them a formal challenge to meet him in the open plain ; but Randolph replied that he never took counsel of an enemy. His presence in their front, however, did not check their spirit of enterprise, which on one occasion nearly proved fatal to himself. Douglas, the bravest of all the heroes who fought under Bruce's banner, and his king's most honoured friend, one night, at the head of a small body of picked men, forced his way into the English camp, where, it would seem, the watch was but indifferently kept, penetrated even to the king's tent, and cut the cords with his own hands, shouting his war-cry and slaying all who ventured to encounter him ; happily, before he could reach the king himself, the tumult awakened some of his attendants, who gallantly fought and fell to secure their master's safety, and Douglas was balked of the great prize which he had hoped to secure, and was forced to retreat. Soon afterwards the whole army retired to their own country, and, at the beginning of the next year, Mortimer, though not included in the council of regency, made peace with Bruce, in which every claim of England to superiority over Scotland was resigned ; it was agreed that the infant prince, David Bruce, should marry Edward's sister Jane, and that Bruce should pay 30,000 marks as a recompense for the damage done in the late invasion. The children were at once married at Berwick, and 20,000 marks were paid, which Isabella

and Mortimer appropriated to themselves, to the great offence of the kingdom.

The peace itself, which was generally looked upon as dishonourable to the nation, added greatly to the detestation in which they were held; the nobles began to conspire against them, and, to strike terror into them, Mortimer brought the earl of Kent, the king's uncle, to trial for treason, and compelled Edward to consent to his execution. His success in this matter only made him more insolent, and when Edward was eighteen, the age at which English princes attained their majority, he resolved to bear his domination no longer. The nobles, to whom he confided his determination, gladly seconded it by every means in their power. The queen dowager and Mortimer were seized at Nottingham; he was condemned without a trial by the parliament, and hanged at Tyburn; and she was confined to her manor of Rising, near London, where she passed the remaining twenty-seven years of her life in privacy and contempt.

Even before his accession to the throne Edward had been affianced to Philippa, daughter of the count of Hainault; in the year 1328 he had married her, and the next year she had borne him a son, celebrated afterwards throughout Europe as the Black Prince. On his assuming the reins of government, he found that though more than half a century had elapsed since the accession of his grandfather, neither the lapse of time, nor the wise regulations of the first Edward, had done more to improve the dispositions, or to increase the tranquillity of his people, than the misgovernment of the second had effected in brutalizing them, and in sowing anew the seeds of disorder. Robberies and outrages of every kind had become as common as in the time of John and Henry, and the perpetrators were still protected by powerful barons, and were often indeed their agents in executing revenge upon their enemies. Like his grandfather, Edward set himself resolutely to work to repress these atrocities, inflicting severe punishment on the guilty, and upholding the majesty of the law and the authority of the judges with such resolute vigour, that he soon restored peace and security as far as they were capable of being established among a people in whom the principles of rapine were so deeply rooted that even the sufferers, while smarting under the personal injury, hardly looked upon it as a crime.

Robert Bruce had died in 1329; his son David was a child only seven years old; and Edward Balliol, the son of that John Balliol to whom the crown of Scotland had been originally adjudged, thought it a good opportunity to assert his claims to his inheritance, in which he was encouraged by some of the English nobles who had possessed estates in Scotland, of which they had been

A.D. 1332.

deprived in the late wars, but which Bruce, in the treaty of Northampton, had engaged to restore to them. This agreement, however, he had delayed to perform, and Randolph, the guardian of the young king, believing on good grounds that the nobles in question were likely to prefer the interests of England to those of Scotland, positively refused to fulfil it. Edward hardly thought such a cause a sufficient justification of a formal rupture of the peace between the two countries, though he did not scruple to connive at an expedition in aid of Balliol sailing from the Humber. But Randolph, while preparing to oppose it, died after a short illness, and the regency fell into the hands of the Earl of Mar, a cousin of the young king, but a man of very moderate abilities, and wholly destitute of energy or presence of mind. He, however, had not much difficulty in collecting a force of 30,000 men by the time that Balliol landed on the shores of the Frith of Forth. Balliol expected to be joined by a large party in Scotland, but those who actually did come over to him were few in number and not such as were able to bring any large bodies of retainers to his standard. When all were united they did not amount to above a tenth of the number of the royal forces, and their situation seemed desperate. It would have proved so in ordinary circumstances, but the very hopelessness of his situation inspired Balliol with resolution which Mar's incapacity crowned with success. He surprised the king's army at midnight on Dupplin Moor, and routed them with immense slaughter. His victory speedily swelled his ranks, he seized Perth, and in a little more than six weeks from ^{Sept.} the day that he landed, he was crowned at Scone by the bishop ¹³³² of Dunkeld. To secure the royal dignity which he had so easily acquired, he now openly sought the alliance of Edward, agreeing to renew the dependence of Scotland upon England, to serve the king of England in all his wars, and to cede to him Berwick and other important territories on the frontier. But scarcely had he concluded this agreement, when he in his turn was surprised by Randolph's son, the young earl of Moray, at Annan, defeated, and expelled from his kingdom within three months of his coronation.

Edward now marched to the north to assist his distressed ally, and laid siege to Berwick, which Balliol had not surrendered to him before his expulsion. It was gallantly defended; and sir Archibald Douglas, who was now regent, for the earl of Mar had been slain in the surprise on Dupplin Moor, resolved to risk a fight to relieve it. On the 19th of July, 1333, Edward, for the first time, commanded his army in a pitched battle. He drew up his men on Halidon Hill, Douglas occupied an opposite height, and a morass lay between the hostile camps. As the king of England

remained firm in his advantageous position, Douglas advanced to the attack. While descending the hill, and crossing the bog, his troops were exposed to the aim of the English archers, without the possibility of retaliating, and when they came to close conflict they were already in disorder, and afforded an easy victory to their enemies, who calmly awaited their approach. On this day the slaughter of Bannockburn was nearly avenged. Thirty thousand Scots, with numbers of the most valiant and powerful nobles in the kingdom, including the regent himself, were slain. The victory was followed by the submission of the whole kingdom to Balliol, with the exception of four or five fortresses, still held by adherents of king David, and all possibility of resistance to English influence seemed to be extinguished for ever.

And perhaps this might have been the case had Balliol possessed, we need not say an exalted courage, but merely spirit enough to value his own dignity, and the independence of his country; but instead of showing such a disposition, his first act was to dismember his kingdom by ceding all the southern counties to Edward; and the indignation which this conduct excited in Scotchmen of every rank kept alive Bruce's party, who maintained a slow and comparatively uneventful warfare against Balliol and the English with gradually increasing success.

After some years Edward's attention was diverted from Scotch affairs by an event which opened a new field for his ambition on the Continent. Charles IV., king of France, had died in 1328, without male issue, and Edward claimed the throne as the grandson of Charles's father, Philip IV., by his daughter Isabella, in opposition to Philip of Valois, the grandson of the preceding king, Philip III., by his younger son, Charles of Valois. As it had been previously decided that the Salic law prevailed in France, according to which no female could inherit the throne, the peers, to whom the claims of the rival princes were submitted, unanimously decided in favour of Philip, who was crowned king of France; and Edward, after some demur, acknowledged his title by consenting to do him homage as his liege lord for the duchy of Guienne, which he inherited in the French territory. A more complete abandonment of his own pretensions could not be imagined; and no one expected there would ever be an attempt to revive them, when, in 1337, Robert of Artois, a man nearly related to the French royal family, but of infamous character, being outlawed by Philip for his crimes, fled to Edward, and easily awakened in his ambitious mind an inclination to assert by force of arms those pretensions, of which more equitable and peaceful proceedings had served only to establish the futility.

The protection which Philip had granted to David Bruce, who

A.D. 1338.

was still residing in France with his youthful queen, was a deep offence to Edward, and was probably not without its influence on his mind, when he determined to attack him. Aware, however, of the magnitude of the undertaking, for France had increased in power and resources during the last century much more than England, he proceeded to contract alliances on the Continent, making treaties with Louis, the emperor of Germany, who appointed him vicar of the empire, so as to give him authority over the German princes: with his own father-in-law, the count of Hainault, a warrior of great military reputation; with other princes of minor importance on the borders of France; and with James von Artaveld, a citizen of Ghent, originally a brewer, who had raised so strong a democratic faction in all the principalities of Flanders, that at this time he was the virtual ruler of that opulent country, the earl of Flanders being reduced to a state of complete insignificance, and driven into France. Philip made similar preparations on his side. Among his supporters he numbered the pope, the king of Bohemia, the duke of Austria, the duke of Brittany (that great province being still independent of France), and other rulers of smaller states, so that almost the whole of the north of Europe was arrayed on one side or on the other.

Edward, in order to carry on the war on a scale suited to its importance, appealed to his parliament for extraordinary supplies; and, though that body had formerly deliberated on Philip's claim of homage for Guienne, and had decided that the king was bound to do fealty to him for that province as his liege lord, it now with equal unanimity approved of the war, the commons begging him to pursue his right, and promising him all support in the prosecution of it.

In July, 1338, he sailed from the Orwell, and landed at Antwerp, with an army of 50,000 men; but all this mighty preparation terminated in an unsuccessful and inglorious campaign. To conciliate the German princes Edward laid siege to Cambray, a city which belonged of right to the empire, but which was held by Philip at that time. As it proved too strong to be carried by a sudden assault, he raised the siege, and marched across the frontier of France, when he found that some of his allies who held fiefs of that kingdom, and among them his own brother-in-law, the count of Hainault, who had lately succeeded his father, quitted his standard, because they would not invade the territories of their liege lord, thus showing how idle they esteemed Edward's pretensions. However, he proceeded onwards. Philip also, with nearly double his numbers, marched towards the frontier, and at Vironfosse the two armies confronted each other. Herald's were sent to and fro between the kings, and with much solemnity the

A.D. 1339.

following Friday was fixed for the battle; but, before the day came, the French councillors had represented to their king so forcibly the inequality of the risk to be encountered by Edward and himself, since, as the king of England had the sea open to him, he, if defeated, would only lose his army, while Philip, if beaten, would be in danger of losing his kingdom, that, though unwillingly, he yielded to their reasonings, and drew off his army: and the only war-cry raised on that day by the French soldiers was excited by a hare, which ran along their front. The foremost ranks raised a shout, and those in the rear thinking the battle had commenced, armed in haste, and pressed forwards. The princes knighted some young aspirants after fame; but when they spurred to the front, and reached the field long after their only enemy, the hare, had disappeared, the shouts were changed into great laughter, and they were greeted with the title of Knights of the Hare, which they kept till their death. It marks the feelings and state of knowledge of the age that Philip, though an accomplished and able prince, was partly influenced in his resolution to avoid a battle by a letter, which he received from Robert, king of Sicily, who was greatly devoted to the study of astrology, and who now wrote to him to say that he had often cast both his and Edward's nativity, and had learnt that, if ever he engaged in battle when Edward himself was present, he would surely be defeated, and therefore he conjured him to avoid a conflict, of which the issue must inevitably be fatal to him.

Neither king nor parliament, however, were daunted at the ineffectual results of this campaign. The parliament, indeed, availed themselves of the king's necessities to exact the concession of some valuable privileges, and the abolition or diminution of some abuses, but in return they were more liberal of their grants than before. Edward, further to encourage his allies, now assumed the title of king of France, and quartered the lilies on his shield, and was preparing to renew his invasion, when he heard that Philip had stationed a large fleet in the harbour of Sluys, with a view to intercept him on his passage. From the beginning of his reign Edward had been fond of asserting the right of England to the sovereignty of the seas, and he was determined, now that an opportunity offered, to prove that right by action. With all his efforts, however, he could scarcely collect more than half the number of ships arrayed against him; but he set sail, determined to force his way to the enemy's coast, in spite of all obstacles. The French fleet was so numerous, that, according to Froissart's comparison, its masts looked like a wood. Four hundred ships, many of them manned by Genoese sailors, who had already acquired a high maritime reputation, and others by Normans, who had never

A.D. 1340.

entirely disused the piratical habits by which they had originally won the lands that they possessed, were awaiting his approach, while he had only 240.* Without a moment's delay he attacked them. His archers, with whom every ship was furnished, cleared the French decks, the men-at-arms boarded them, and in a short time above three-fourths of the whole fleet were in the hands of the English, and it was only the darkness of the night that enabled the remainder to escape into their harbours. Nearly 30,000 French fell in the battle; and the disaster was so great, and apparently so irretrievable, that none of his councillors dared to reveal it to Philip. He learnt it at last from the hint of the court fool, who told him that he looked upon the English as cowards; and when the gratified monarch asked what they had done to deserve such a stigma, replied that they would not have had the courage to leap into the sea, and be drowned, as the French had done, rather than submit to be prisoners when they had lost all their ships.

Edward, on his landing, returned public thanks to God for his victory in the church of Ardembourg, and sent orders to England for a national thanksgiving. He now laid siege to Tournay, one of the most opulent cities in Flanders, but at that time occupied by a French garrison. Philip watched his operations with an army superior in numbers, but still maintained his resolution of not affording him the chance of a pitched battle; and this second campaign seemed likely to terminate in the same uneventful manner as the first, when by the mediation of Jane, countess of Hainault, who was Philip's sister, and the mother of queen Philippa of England, a truce was made, and negotiations were opened with a view to a permanent peace.

In spite of his naval victory, Edward had hitherto been completely baffled in his attempts upon France; and the results appeared for a while to endanger his authority over his own subjects. Though the parliament had granted the taxes which he required, it was not possible to levy them with the celerity which he expected; and, as he returned in very bad humour with the issue of his expedition, he was inclined to wreak his displeasure on the first persons he could find on whom to lay the blame of his disappointment. The minister to whom the charge of collecting the new taxes had been entrusted was Stratford, the primate, and the treasurer was the bishop of Lichfield. Edward, on his return, threw the treasurer into prison, and proceeded to take steps to punish the archbishop also, with which view he abstained from summoning him to the parliament which he convened. But the clergy had long since claimed an exemption from all secular jurisdiction, which amounted in effect to an impunity for all offences; and the archbishop now

* Froissart says that the French were to the English as four to one.

ventured to threaten with excommunication all who on any pretence should treat any ecclesiastic with violence; and, in a letter to the king himself, openly pronounced the kingly authority to be inferior to that of the priesthood. Edward was only the more incensed at his insolence: but the whole body of the clergy combined against him in defence of their prelates; and at last, as the archbishop abated his pretensions, and requested leave to prove his innocence before his peers by submitting to a regular trial, the king, sensible, perhaps, that there was no real ground for the charges which he had brought against him, received him again into favour.

But the settlement of this dispute was not the end of his difficulties. The supplies which the parliament had granted, unusually great though they were, were wholly inadequate to meet the vast expenses of his French expeditions; and, the houses following the course they had constantly pursued of late years, made the additional subsidies which he demanded the price of further concessions on his part. He was compelled to grant, that for the future no noble should be punished except by sentence of his peers in parliament, and to consent to an act which established the principle of the responsibility of his ministers to parliament, and which gave that body a direct control over their appointment, and over their conduct in office. His assent to these measures was extorted from him most unwillingly. His ministers liked the last of them even less than he did himself; and though he ratified them formally now, he at the same time framed a secret protest against them, in which he declared, that, though he now dissembled his disapprobation of what he absurdly enough called an illegal measure (as if an act, passed by all the members of a legislative body, could possibly be illegal), he intended to revoke it as soon as possible: and two years afterwards, when, being no longer in such need, the necessity for his submission to his parliament had in some degree passed away, he procured their consent to the repeal of this offensive enactment.

There were other parliaments which he treated with more respect. He was anxious to monopolize the legislative power, and jealous of all interference with his authority. But on matters of trade and commerce he was wisely not only tolerant of, but even anxious for advice: and he early adopted a plan for which former reigns had afforded one or two precedents, of convening bodies to which he also gave the name of parliaments, and which were charged to examine, discuss, and report upon different matters affecting the commercial and shipping interests of the kingdom. Though he called them parliaments, in reality, as a recent historian has pointed out, they rather resembled the royal and parliamentary commissioners of modern times; since their business was not to

A.D. 1341.

legislate, but only to institute investigations and report their results as a foundation for legislation. But the attention which Edward throughout his reign, paid to matters which warriors in general thought beneath their notice, shows him to have been a prince of large and enlightened mind: and, in many important respects, greatly in advance of his age.

CHAPTER XVII.

EDWARD III. (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1341
1377.

HE was so fully occupied with the affairs of his own kingdom that he would very probably have dropped all his pretensions to the French crown, if circumstances had not arisen the very next year which offered him a fresh opening into that kingdom. In the summer of 1341, John, duke of Brittany, died, leaving his duchy to his niece, who was married to Charles of Blois, a nephew of king Philip. But the count de Montfort, the nearest male heir, though in John's lifetime he had formally acknowledged Charles and his wife, whose name was Jane, as his future sovereigns, yet, as soon as John was dead, sought to set aside their claims, and to make himself master of the duchy. He seized at once upon some of the most important towns, and then, feeling sure that Philip would espouse the cause of his nephew, he repaired to England, where he had inherited the earldom of Richmond, and solicited the assistance of Edward, offering if he succeeded in making himself master of Brittany, to do him homage for it as king of France. In all consistency Edward was bound to discountenance his pretensions, for the claim which he himself had advanced to the crown of France was derived from his mother, and if one female could inherit a kingdom, it certainly followed that another might succeed to a duchy. The princess Jane's case was in fact far stronger than his, for Brittany was a fief of the French crown, and it had never been alleged that females could not succeed to fiefs, while there were precedents of such succession having been allowed: but as ambition was stronger than a regard for justice in Edward's mind, he overlooked these considerations, made an alliance with De Montfort, and when shortly afterwards the count was taken prisoner by Philip, he sent a powerful force to support his countess, who maintained the war on his behalf with great vigour. In the summer of 1342 he landed

A.D. 1345.

himself in Brittany with a small force, and laid siege to Vannes and other towns : but Vannes made so stout a resistance that the French had time to collect a powerful army, with which they threatened his communications, and cut off his supplies so successfully that the next year he was glad to listen to the mediation of the pope's legates, and to conclude a truce with Philip for three years, leaving the contending parties in Brittany in possession of what each held at the time.

This truce, however, was not suffered to last its full time. Philip had no real intention of allowing his nephew to be stripped of a great portion of his wife's inheritance; nor could Edward renounce the prospect which his alliance with De Montfort held out to him, of succeeding in his designs on France. Soon, instead of prosecuting negotiations for peace, each began to make complaints of the other, frivolous except to those who were determined to find in any trifle grounds for a renewal of their quarrel. Edward had the address to make his parliament enter into his views. They granted him unusual supplies; and, in the beginning of 1345, he commenced that war against France which has thrown such lustre over his name in the eyes of those who allow themselves to be so dazzled with success and triumph as to be blinded to the evils of ambition, injustice, and rapacity, and to the greatness of the crime of beginning an unprovoked war.

His plan of the campaign was to attack France on two sides; and, with that view, he sent his cousin, the earl of Derby, into Guienne, who invaded the districts bordering on that province, and gained a victory at Auberoche, near Bordeaux, which would have been accounted a most splendid achievement, if its glory had not been eclipsed by the superior importance of that gained by Edward himself in the succeeding year. The count de Lisle was besieging Auberoche with near 12,000 men, and Derby had not above 300 men-at-arms and 600 archers with him. But, in spite of his inferiority in numbers, he determined to attempt to relieve the place. The smallness of his force favoured him in one respect, by enabling him to approach the French without his arrival in their neighbourhood being known; and, attacking them unexpectedly while they were at supper, he routed them completely; several thousands were slain, and the prisoners amounted to three times the number of his whole force.

Edward's own expedition was delayed by a voyage which he made to Flanders in the hopes of prevailing on the Flemings to depose their earl, and to elect his youthful son, the prince of Wales, as their sovereign. The project was supported by Von Artaveld; but he had given so much offence by his insolence and cruelty, that he was murdered in the autumn in a popular tumult; and Edward,

A.D. 1346.

deprived of his chief ally in that quarter, returned to England. But the year had been wasted in these fruitless negotiations, and it was not till the spring of 1346 that he sailed with his army from Southampton. His fleet rivalled in its numbers that which bore Agamemnon and Achilles to the destruction of Troy, but his army did not exceed 30,000 men, and one-half of them were light troops drawn from Wales and Ireland, and though valuable in a skirmish or a pursuit, neither by their equipment nor their discipline well fitted to bear a share in a pitched battle. He landed safely at La Hogue, and advanced into Normandy, ravaging that province in every direction; took Caen, which enriched his army with an immense booty, and, being baffled in his attempt on Rouen, by finding the bridge across the Seine broken down, he followed the course of the river almost up to the gates of Paris, pillaging and burning all the villages which lay in his line of march. Meanwhile, Philip had collected a vast army, and was preparing to hem him in on all sides; but he perceived his danger in time, with great promptitude and despatch he repaired one of the bridges which had been broken down, crossed the Seine, and retired towards Flanders; but on arriving on the banks of the Somme, he found the bridges over that river also broken down or strongly guarded with a strong force defending the opposite bank, while Philip was pursuing him with above 100,000 men. However, a peasant of the district, who had been taken prisoner, was tempted by a large reward to show him a ford below Abbeville, which was passable at low water. He forced his passage in spite of all opposition, but so narrow was his escape, that his rearguard had hardly crossed before the French king reached the ground that he had just quitted. By this time, however, the tide had risen so much as to prevent his being immediately pursued across the river, and, seeing that a battle was inevitable, he availed himself of the respite thus afforded him to choose his ground, and to endeavour to make amends for the inequality of his numbers by the skill of his dispositions.

On the 25th of August the vanguard of the French came in sight of the English army, drawn up in three lines on the rising ground behind the small village of Crecy. The first line was commanded by the prince of Wales, who was not yet seventeen years old, and who had with him, as advisers and assistants, sir John Chandos and other knights, the flower of the English chivalry. The third line was held in reserve, and commanded by the king himself. They were not one-fourth of the amount of the French army, but they were fresh, in good order, and full of confidence in the abilities of their king and general; while the French presumed so much on their apparently overpowering numbers, that they neglected all

military discipline. Philip, seeing that his men were fatigued with their long march round by Abbeville, by the advice of his chief officers issued orders to halt, intending to defer the attack till the next day; but no one attended to them, the rear refused to stop till they were as forward as the front line, the foremost ranks pressed on to preserve their relative positions. Thus they marched on in disorder till they came in sight of the English, and then the front ranks fell back on those in the rear in greater disorder still. "No one," says Froissart, "who was not present can imagine the confusion, or the bad management and disorder of the French. Kings, dukes, earls, and barons, advanced in no regular order, but one after the other, or any way most pleasing to themselves." The Genoese cross-bowmen began the battle; but were received with such a storm of arrows by the English archers, that they threw away their weapons and fled in confusion. Philip, in his indignation, cried out to kill them as merely stopping up the way of the rest of the army; and many of the men-at-arms actually turned from the attack of the enemy to slaughter their own discomfited comrades. Meantime the archers poured their arrows upon the advancing cavalry, not only killing the horses, but piercing through the armour of the knights themselves; and the Welsh troops, rushing in among the disordered ranks, pitilessly slaughtered all who fell with their long knives. It was thus that the king of Bohemia fell; he was blind, but desired two of his knights to lead him into the thickest of the fight, that he might strike one blow for his ally. They fastened the reins of his horse to theirs, and were all found lying dead in one heap after the battle. The counts of Alençon and Flanders kept their men in better order, and pressed the prince of Wales so hard, that some of the nobles about him sent a message to the king to beg him to come to their aid. The king asked whether his son was dead, unhorsed, or badly wounded; and when he was told that he was still unhurt, he bade the messenger return and say that no reinforcement was to be expected from him, that his son was to win his own spurs, and that his wish was that the glory and honour of the day should be all his own. At last both the counts were slain; John of Hainault, Edward's brother-in-law, seized the bridle of Philip's horse, and forced him unwillingly from the field. They continued their flight all night; and at daybreak the king reached Amiens, accompanied by only five barons of all the numerous host that a few hours before had marched so confidently to reap what they expected to prove a certain and easy victory.

The loss of the French was not confined to that single day. Several detachments arrived on the morrow, ignorant of what had happened, and thinking to be in time to join the main body before

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the battle. They were attacked in detail and easily defeated; and a division sent forward by Edward to pursue the straggling remains of the defeated army overtook and slaughtered so many, that the carnage of the second day was far greater than that of the first; and the total loss of the French exceeded the numbers of the whole English army, while of the English there fell only three knights, one esquire, and a very few soldiers of inferior rank.

During the whole of the day of battle Edward had never put on his helmet: and, when victory was complete, he came forward, and, embracing his son, attributed the victory wholly to his valour and conduct, and bade him assume the crest of the king of Bohemia, a plume of feathers, which, with its motto, *Ich dien*, "I serve," has ever since been borne by the princes of Wales, in memory of this great day, and of the exploits of their greatest predecessor.

Edward had learned prudence from Philip's tactics, and could now afford to be cautious; instead, therefore, of attempting at present to penetrate further into France, he laid siege to Calais, in order to possess a sure means of retreat in case of necessity, and of entrance into the country, at any future time. And, while occupied with this blockade, he received the news of a victory gained in his own country, of almost equal importance with that of Crecy. David Bruce, the king of Scotland, had returned from France in 1342: and the kindness with which he had been treated there, had cemented the alliance between him and Philip. Wishing to assist his ally by making a diversion in his favour, and thinking also Edward's absence a favourable opportunity for an inroad, in the autumn of 1346 he invaded Northumberland with 50,000 men, and extended his ravages and devastations as far as the city of Durham. In this emergency queen Philippa, who had been left guardian of the kingdom, showed herself worthy of her gallant husband. She was unable to collect more than 12,000 men, whom she entrusted to the command of several nobles, including both the archbishops and bishops of Durham and Lincoln (for the military order of the clergy was not yet extinct). The two armies met under the walls of Durham, in a plain since known as that of Neville's Cross, from a monument which Sir Ralph Neville, one of the principal English commanders erected in commemoration of the victory. Before the conflict began the queen herself rode through the ranks, exhorting the soldiers to do their duty, and to fight for their lord and king.* And manfully did they reply to her exhortation, the Scots were routed with great slaughter, king David himself was taken prisoner and conveyed to London, where he was confined in the Tower. And Philippa, now thinking the kingdom

* Burton (History of Scotland, III. 25) denies the queen's presence at the battle, because Froissart's statement is not confirmed by other writers, but on the sufficiency of this argument see note on p. 134.

safe on all sides, left the government in the hands of a council, crossed the Channel to join her husband, and was triumphantly received by him in the camp before Calais.

The siege of that town was long protracted: Edward forbore to storm it, being content with the slow but sure effects of a blockade, and John de Vienne, the governor, defended it with consummate skill and fortitude. When he perceived that the king's intention was to reduce the town by starvation, he drove out all the citizens who had not laid up for themselves a sufficient supply of provisions; 1700 women, and children, and men unfit for war arrived starving in the English lines, and Edward, with a rare humanity, fed them and dismissed them, giving to each a present of money; but when the scarcity became more severe, and the governor a second time weeded the fated town of its useless mouths, he refused to repeat his generous act, and a wretched multitude perished of famine between the English camp and their native walls. At last the distress of the garrison became too intolerable for human fortitude to bear; on one occasion a few ships with supplies succeeded in entering the harbour; but a larger fleet, attempting to relieve the place, was captured by the English. The besiegers intercepted a letter from the governor to Philip, telling him that the garrison had eaten their horses, their dogs, and every animal in the place; but, whether such positive intelligence ever reached him or not, he knew well the fearful straits to which the town must be reduced, and resolved to make a vigorous effort for its relief. He collected another army, not less than that which had fought at Crecy the preceding year, and approached the coast in the hope of forcing Edward to a battle; but the earl of Derby, who had joined his master when Crecy had relieved Guienne from all danger, guarded all the passes so skilfully that there was no possibility of attacking the besieging army with advantage, and Edward refused to be tempted by a challenge of Philip's to come out and fight him in the open plain, or into relaxing for a moment his pressure on a prey now almost within his grasp. The French army retired, and Calais was left to its fate. Edward was so enraged at its stubborn resistance, which had lasted twelve months, that for a time he refused to grant the garrison any terms, and required them to surrender at discretion; but his own knights remonstrated against such unusual severity, and at last he consented to spare the rest on condition that six of the principal citizens should bring him the keys with ropes round their necks. The glory of the conqueror pales before that of the heroic men who now devoted themselves for the safety of their fellow-citizens. It was not doubted that the six thus required to be given up would be instantly put to death, and all stood in silent dismay, not

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knowing who were to be the victims, nor how they were to be chosen. In this moment of perplexing agony, the wealthiest citizen of the whole town, Eustace de St. Pierre, offered himself as the first of the six; a second, John Daire, made a similar offer: their example raised a noble enthusiasm in others, and the required number was speedily made up. Bareheaded and barefooted, with halters round their necks, did these gallant men present themselves before Edward, who ordered them to instant execution. At this cruel command the courtiers stood aghast; many remonstrated with the king, but in vain. Sir Walter Manny, who had originally come to England in the train of Philippa, on her marriage, and who had long been one of his most renowned and most honoured knights, entreated him not to tarnish the fame he had won by such merciless severity towards the innocent; his prayers too were disregarded, and the prisoners were being led away to death, when the queen, hearing of what was taking place, hastened to her husband's tent, her situation (she was near her confinement) increasing the influence she always so deservedly possessed over his mind, and besought him to grant her the men's lives as a favour to herself. Edward was too true a knight to be deaf to the prayers of his lady-love, the prisoners were spared to bless the name of their noble-minded protectress,* and de St. Pierre was afterwards greatly trusted by Edward, who, except in moments of unusual exasperation, knew how to honour virtue even in an enemy.

Anxious to secure his conquest, the king expelled the greater part of the inhabitants of Calais, and peopled it with his own countrymen, appointing it to be the general mart for the chief objects of exportation from England, such as wool, tin, and lead, and thus making it a place of great commercial importance. Above a year afterwards it became the scene of a romantic event, too characteristic of the manners and feelings of the age of chivalry, and also of the disposition of the king himself, to be passed over. Edward had entrusted the government of Calais to Aymery de Pavie, a Lombard knight, who, for a bribe of 20,000 crowns, agreed to betray it to the French; but Edward had intelligence of his treachery, and compelled him to continue the negotiation, and to

* I have related this story on the authority of Froissart; but it is doubted by many recent historians, partly because de St. Pierre's subsequent position as an officer, trusted by Edward to keep order in Calais, seems to them inconsistent with the devotion to his country exhibited in this instance; and partly because no other ancient chronicler, except Froissart, mentions it. But, in the first place, de St. Pierre's self-devotion was rather to his fellow citizens than to his country, and does not seem incompatible with faithful submission to the conqueror. In the feudal times, loyalty to the sovereign sat lightly upon most men; and the frequent conquests and transference of provinces inclined the population easily to submit to a new master. And the high qualities de St. Pierre had exhibited, might well lead Edward to trust him, if he was willing to be trusted. And, secondly, no one was better informed than Froissart of all the events of Edward's wars; and we shall have to give up many undoubted facts in history, if we are to discredit those which are only recorded by one historian.

give him notice of the day on which the proposed surrender was to take place. It was fixed for New Year's Day, 1349, and, the day before, the king, with 900 picked men, arrived in Calais: he himself wearing plain armour, and the party being under the nominal command of sir Walter Manny. At midnight a detachment of French were admitted, as had been agreed; but no sooner had they passed the gates than they were attacked, and slain or taken prisoners by the English, who then, with the garrison, sallied out to attack the larger body which was stationed at a short distance from the walls, awaiting the success of their treacherous attempt (for there was a truce between France and England at the time). A fierce conflict ensued, and Edward himself engaged sir Eustace de Ribaumont, one of the most distinguished knights of France, and the chief of those who had been sent by Philip to challenge him to a battle in front of Calais. Edward, who, as has been said, was disguised as a private knight, was in great danger: twice De Ribaumont struck him down upon his knees; but at last his courage and skill prevailed, and the Frenchman was forced to surrender. Many of the French knights were taken prisoners; and when Edward returned to Calais, and had them brought before him, they learned for the first time that the king of England in person had been their conqueror. He treated them with chivalrous courtesy, and at a banquet to which he invited them, he took from his own head a chaplet of pearls, and placed it on the brows of sir Eustace, giving him his liberty without ransom, and bidding him show the chaplet wherever he went, and say that it had been given him by the king of England as the bravest knight whom he had ever encountered.

The finances of neither kingdom were able to sustain the expense of a protracted war, and the fall of Calais was followed by a truce which lasted six years. Such an interval of peace was of rare occurrence in that warlike time, yet the only interruption to complete tranquillity was an engagement between the English and Spanish fleets off the Sussex coast. There had been no declaration of war between the nations; but Edward, who was very jealous of his naval supremacy, took offence at the ostentation with which the Spaniards swept the Channel on their way to Flanders with their merchandize, and equipped a fleet nearly equal in numbers, but inferior in the size of the vessels, to intercept them on their return. He himself and the prince of Wales took the command, and so obstinate was the battle, and so greatly were the English ships damaged, that both king and prince were in great personal danger. The ship in which the prince was actually did sink, and he had barely time to save himself and his crew by boarding a Spanish vessel which he had taken; the rest fled, and Edward, not without severe loss, returned in triumph.

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to the queen, who had beheld the conflict from a neighbouring castle.

It was not through war, however, that the heaviest losses fell upon the English nation. A pestilence, more terrible in its nature and more universal than any previously recorded, had traversed the greater part of the civilized world; and, in 1349, it reached this island, and committed fearful ravages. Its evils were not confined to the loss of life that it caused; but, like the plague in the reign of Charles II., it demoralized the whole people by engendering despair, lawlessness, and a forgetfulness of even the strongest ties of natural affection. All care for the future was laid aside, as no man felt sure of his life; and it was only by the most stringent ordinances that the people could be compelled to attend to the cultivation of the land, or the labourers to work for wages, which, it seemed probable, their masters might not live to pay, nor they themselves survive to receive.

When the truce had lasted about two years king Philip died, and was succeeded by his eldest son, John, a brave and honourable prince, but destitute of the prudence and caution of his father. The first years of his reign were disquieted by internal faction, caused partly by his own hasty temper, and still more by the mischievous conduct of the king of Navarre, who, though possessed of a kingly title, was lord only of a petty principality on the borders of Spain, and of a few fortresses in Normandy, and who sought to give himself that importance by his intrigues which his insignificant territories could not procure him. At last he was seized by John, and thrown into prison, and his brother immediately appealed to the protection of Edward, who, now that his kingdom had recovered from the exhaustion caused by the previous war and by the pestilence, was willing enough to renew his interference in the affairs of France. In support of his new ally he again invaded that country on both sides, sending the prince of Wales to Guienne, and entering it himself from Calais. After ravaging Picardy he left the earl of Derby, whom he created duke of Lancaster, in command in that province, and hastened towards Scotland to repel an incursion which the Scotch had made into the northern counties. The prince's operations were more important. His army did not consist of above 12,000 men; but with that small force he penetrated as far as the Loire, when, finding that John, imitating the tactics of his father, had caused the bridges to be broken down, and was preparing to hem him in with a superior force, he retreated back towards Guienne; but, stopping to take the castle of Romorantin, he lost some days, and gave time for the French to overtake him. Near Poitiers the French king, with 60,000 men, came up with the small force under command of the prince. He was preparing for an immediate assault,

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when the cardinal du Perigord prevailed upon him to allow him to endeavour, by negotiation, to avert the bloodshed which was about to ensue. The prince was so sensible of the difficulties of his position that he expressed his willingness to submit to any terms consistent with the honour of himself, and of his country. He offered to surrender all his conquests, and not to serve against France for seven years. But John insisted that he should surrender himself and 100 of his knights prisoners; and, as this was refused, both sides prepared for battle on the following day.

Sept. Precious time had been wasted in this parley by the French,
19th. of which the prince took skilful advantage, strengthening
1336. his position by intrenchments, placing ambuscades, and lining the hedges between which the French must advance to the attack with picked archers. Early in the morning of the 19th of September the battle began. The French vanguard, passing between the two lines of archers, whom they never saw till their arrows fell among their ranks, were instantly thrown into confusion: unfortunately for the French king, his sons, though only boys, were present, under the care of some chosen knights, who, seeing the disorder, hurried them off the field, lest they should fall into the enemy's hands. Their flight, of which the reason was not understood, was imitated by the whole division; and the second division followed the example of the first. No part of the French army behaved well except the force which was under the command of John himself. This portion, and it was more numerous than the whole force of the English, for a while made a gallant stand: but they were dispirited by the rout of their comrades, and at last they also gave way, and the king himself was taken prisoner, fighting gallantly to the last. One of his sons also, prince Philip, was taken at the same time.

The skill and valour with which the prince of Wales had won the battle against such vast odds was truly admirable: but more really glorious by far was the moderation and humility which he displayed after his victory. The English kings of that era, though often slaves to ambition, seem rarely to have been intoxicated by success. But the young Edward on this occasion surpassed all previous or subsequent conquerors in his considerate modesty. The French king was brought captive to his tent. He received him bareheaded with the deepest submission, as if their respective characters of vassal and liege lord were in no degree changed by the accidents of war; and, at the banquet which he prepared for him in the evening, he waited on him as his chamberlain, declining to sit down in his presence, complimenting him on the personal valour which he had exhibited, and which, in truth, had been very conspicuous, and ascribing his own success, not to his own

A.D. 1360.

superiority, but to the favour of God. He continued the same behaviour to him on his arrival in London. They landed at Southwark. The king was mounted on a superb charger, richly caparisoned; while the prince rode by his side on a smaller horse, and presented his prisoner to his father, who received him with the same courtesy and respect as if he had arrived to pay him a voluntary visit of friendship. Edward had now the unexampled triumph of seeing two hostile monarchs prisoners in London at the same time. But he released David of Scotland soon after on the payment of ransom.

The captivity of John caused sad disorders in France. His son, the dauphin (he was the first prince of France who bore that title), though already giving promise of the talents which were so conspicuous in later years, was as yet too young to govern the kingdom with authority. The populace of Paris, always turbulent, broke out into great excesses; the army became mutinous; and in many districts the peasants rose in insurrection against the nobles, burnt their castles, and subjected them and their families to the most atrocious insults. John, eager to recover his liberty, agreed to restore all the provinces that had been possessed by any of the English kings without any obligation of fealty; but, as his states refused to ratify such a treaty, Edward once more invaded France, in the autumn of 1359, with a far larger army than he had ever commanded before, landed at Calais, ravaged all the surrounding country, and then proceeded to besiege Rheims, from a wish to be crowned king of France in that city. It made so valiant a resistance that the approach of winter compelled him to raise the siege; and before he could resume active operations the next year, the negotiations for peace, which had not been interrupted, were concluded by a treaty signed at Bretigny. The advice and influence of the duke of Lancaster prevailed on Edward to be content with more moderate terms than he had originally demanded, and he formally renounced all claim to the crown of France. But he received extensive provinces in the south-west of that country, retained Calais and other strong fortresses in the north, and obliged John to pay him 3,000,000 crowns of gold for his ransom. King John returned to France in July, 1360; but, after some time, finding himself unable to execute all the stipulations of the treaty, from the reluctance of the inhabitants of some of the ceded provinces to submit to English domination, he came again to England, and surrendered himself a prisoner, telling his councillors, who endeavoured to dissuade him from such a design, that, though good faith were banished from the rest of the earth, she ought still to retain her habitation in the breasts of princes. The palace of the Savoy was assigned to him for his residence, where he remained till his death, in 1364.

Edward was for some years sufficiently occupied in measures for advancing the commercial and manufacturing prosperity of his own kingdom, which had been somewhat interrupted by his long wars, and with struggles against the ecclesiastical power and the court of Rome, whose encroachments he curbed with a strong hand. Before the battle of Poitiers he had procured the passing of the law called the Statute of Provisors,* which established the freedom of election to benefices, and deprived the pope of all power of controlling or interfering with it; and, in 1367, he for ever abolished the payment of tribute with which John had burdened the kingdom, and further diminished the papal influence by making it illegal, in the highest degree, to carry any cause by appeal to the papal courts. Meanwhile the prince of Wales, to whom he had resigned the absolute sovereignty of Guienne, was still engaged in war; Peter the Cruel, king of Spain, was one of the greatest monsters that ever disgraced humanity, and he had especially provoked the indignation of the French, by first imprisoning and then poisoning his queen, Blanche of Bourbon, a French princess. The general detestation in which he was held encouraged Henry of Trastamara, his natural brother, to attempt to dethrone him, and the French sent to his assistance the celebrated Bertrand du Guesclin, whose fame collected around his standard many of the military adventurers who had joined Edward's army in his last expedition into France, and who, since his return to England, had been the terror of the country over which they roved, exacting vast contributions and perpetrating horrid cruelties.

The prince of Wales, a stranger probably to the enormities of which Peter was accused, but influenced by the right of legitimacy, and partly perhaps by an inclination to espouse a cause which was attacked by the French, marched into Castile at the head of an army to reinstate his ally, who had been expelled from Spain; and though Henry and Du Guesclin had forces more than thrice as numerous as his own, he defeated them at Najara, in April 1367; Du Guesclin himself was taken prisoner, and Henry was forced to flee for safety to France.

This was the last advantage gained by the English arms in this reign. The prince's government became unpopular in Guienne, from the taxes which he was forced to impose to meet the debts incurred in his Spanish campaign; and the inhabitants of the province appealed to Charles, the new king of France, whom they still considered as their liege lord in spite of the treaty made by his father with king Edward. And Charles, knowing that the prince's health was failing, and that the king's energies were becoming

* Lingard points out that it should rather be called the Statute *against* Provisors. Provisors being aliens on whom the pope illegally conferred ecclesiastical appointments in England.

A.D. 1370.

impaired by age, was nowise averse to availing himself of any pretext to retrieve the disasters which had been incurred by his father. He poured troops into several of the provinces which John had ceded; the prince was unable from illness to keep the field, and though he endeavoured to stop the inclination on the part of the provinces to return to their allegiance to the French crown, by perpetrating an act of savage cruelty at Limoges, sadly at variance with his usually humane and generous character, slaughtering the whole of the citizens, men, women, and children, to the number of 3000; yet such an atrocity had, as it deserved, an opposite effect, and the French rapidly recovered the greater part of the territories which they had lost. Edward himself prepared for another invasion of France, but was detained so long in England by foul winds, that he was forced to abandon the design. And an army which he did send under his third son, John of Gaunt, or Ghent, to whom, on the death of the duke of Lancaster, he had given that duchy, though it traversed the whole country from Calais to Bordeaux, returned to England without having gained any advantages of importance; at last Edward was forced to make peace with Charles, in which he submitted to be deprived of all his ancestral possessions in France, except the cities of Bordeaux and Bayonne, and of all his conquests except Calais.

The increasing infirmities of age in some degree weakened the vigour of his intellect, and the duke of Lancaster, to whom he entrusted the principal share of the government, was very unpopular. Queen Philippa had been dead some years, and a lady of the name of Alice Perrers, who had been one of her attendants, was supposed to have obtained an undue influence over him; which she exerted, not only in political affairs, but also by impeding the proper course of justice, in favour of those who had purchased her protection. Her ascendancy caused a very general indignation, and when the king, who was still involved in debt, applied to his parliament for additional supplies, it availed itself of his necessities and his weakness to attack his favourites, and even to procure his assent to very stringent enactments designed to curb the rapacity of his mistress. So salutary were the restraints which they sought to impose on the royal prerogative that it long bore the name of "the good parliament;" and its measures were warmly supported by the Black Prince, who entertained great jealousy of the duke of Lancaster, who was very commonly suspected of designing to supplant his youthful son in his inheritance. The prince, who had long been sinking, died in June, 1376, leaving behind him a character for military skill and chivalrous generosity, though somewhat tarnished by the massacre at Limoges, inferior to that of no hero of the age of chivalry; and in the June of the next year,

the king himself, having declared Richard, the son of the Black Prince, his heir, died, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the fifty-first of his reign.

Froissart tells us that it was the common opinion of the English that between two valiant kings of England there is always one weak in mind and body; but Edward III. did not need such a foil as his father to set off his splendid abilities and achievements. As a skilful warrior his victories prove him to have been worthy to be ranked in the very first class; and so dazzling is military success, that in the opinion of the multitude they have probably caused him to be generally ranked above his illustrious grandfather. But an impartial judge must observe that while the ambition of the first Edward was limited to objects within his power, and eminently useful to his people, that of the third aimed at what was neither practicable nor desirable. It was not possible for England to subdue France; and, could she have done so by any accident, it would have been the most unfortunate event that could have befallen her, as the result must have been that she would have become a province of that more powerful and extensive kingdom; while the desire for military glory, and the feeling of hostility to France, which his long wars engendered, were productive of the greatest misfortunes to both nations.

The most truly honourable part of Edward's military character is his generosity to the vanquished, which would have been praiseworthy in any age, but which was especially admirable in one so seldom influenced by moderation or humanity. As a ruler, he, like his ancestors, was inclined to arbitrary measures; but his wars placed him so much at the mercy of his parliament, which in his reign began to have a more correct estimate than before of its legitimate importance, that he was often obliged to submit, though he constantly asserted his right to levy taxes by his own authority, and sometimes exerted it; always, however, in such cases pleading that it was the necessity of defending the kingdom that compelled him to disregard the remonstrances of his people. Unmixed praise may be awarded to the resolution with which he bridled the papal authority within his realm, and to the statesmanlike foresight with which he endeavoured to promote its manufactures and its commerce. In these respects he showed his purpose of imitating the wise patriotism of his grandfather; but he did not imitate his example in the repression of offences, or the punishment of offenders, often pardoning the grossest criminals at the solicitation of powerful nobles, and paying no attention to the earnest remonstrances of his parliament when they represented to him truly that the greatest of evils in a civilized country is the defective administration of law and justice. On the whole, we may pronounce him to have been

A.D. 1377.

an able, brave, and magnanimous, rather than a wise and patriotic king; and we may look on his reign rather as brilliant and splendid for himself, than as fortunate or beneficial to his people.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RICHARD II.

A.D.
1377
1399

HE Black Prince had married his cousin Joan, the only child of his great uncle, the earl of Kent, who was beheaded by Mortimer at the beginning of his father's reign. She was a widow, having been previously married to sir Thomas Holland; and by that marriage she had some sons, half-brothers to the young king.

Richard, often called Richard of Bordeaux, from having been born in that city, was only eleven years old when he succeeded to the throne; and his grandfather had omitted to provide any regency or body of councillors to regulate the government during his minority. His second son, Lionel, duke of Clarence, was dead, having left a daughter, married to the earl of March; but he left three other sons, the dukes of Lancaster, of York, and of Gloucester (though the two last received these titles from their nephew at a subsequent period); and these princes, as the young king's uncles, might have appeared to be pointed out by their relationship as his natural guardians, but they were men of no great ability; and the views of Lancaster and Gloucester, who were both ambitious, were more likely to lead them to seek to thwart each other, than to act in harmony together.

In preventing the anarchy, which there seemed some reason to apprehend, the commons took the lead. They appointed, for the first time, a speaker to preside over their deliberations, choosing Peter de la Mare, a high-spirited man, who had incurred the displeasure of Edward by the freedom with which he led the attacks on his ministers and Alice Perrers at the end of his reign; and then they applied to the lords to nominate a council of regency, which they did, appointing three bishops, two earls, and four knights, but limiting their commission to a year.

There was still war with France; but as Charles V. died the year after Edward, leaving his kingdom also to a child, it was carried on in a languid manner, unproductive of any important

results to either country. Still the necessity which it caused of keeping an armed force on foot created a deficiency in the revenue, and the council had recourse to a poll-tax, as it was called, imposing a tax of three groats on every person of either sex above fifteen years of age. The common people, who had been gradually becoming more discontented at the state of dependence in which they were held by the nobles, and which was at this time more abject in England than in any other country in Europe, had been for some time led to cherish thoughts of turbulence and resistance to their oppressors by the example of the insurrection of the peasants in France. They were now still further exasperated by the insolence of the officers appointed to collect the poll-tax. One of them insulted a tiler's daughter so grossly, that her father knocked out his brains with his hammer, and then, under the name of Wat Tyler, with other associates, excited such an insurrection throughout the south-eastern counties, that in a short time 100,000 men were collected under their guidance on Blackheath. They seized the princess of Wales, on her journey to Canterbury, and compelled her to kiss their leaders, entered London, burnt the duke of Lancaster's palace, pillaged the merchants' warehouses, and at last broke into the Tower, and murdered the archbishop, and other nobles. Richard was passing along Smithfield with a small retinue, when he met a large band of insurgents, with Tyler at their head, who behaved with such insolence, playing with his dagger, and seeming to menace the king with personal violence, that Walworth, the mayor of London, drew his sword, and killed him on the spot. His followers, enraged rather than dismayed at his fall, seemed to be preparing to revenge it, when Richard, with admirable presence of mind, rode forward among them by himself, bidding them not to be angry at having lost their leader, for that he himself would be their leader. Submitting to the voice of authority, thus mingled with condescension, they followed him out of the city, where he granted most of their demands, though his concessions were subsequently revoked by parliament when the nobles had had time to collect an army sufficient to protect the king from any recurrence of the danger.

Richard's subsequent conduct did not, however, fulfil the promise held out by this instance of calmness and courage in his boyhood. In the eighth year of his reign the Scots, having procured the assistance of a body of French cavalry, invaded England, and committed great ravages; and he marched into Scotland, at the head of 60,000 men, penetrating into the very heart of the country, burning Edinburgh and Perth, while they, disregarding the devastation which he was committing, inflicted almost equal injury in Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancashire.

A.D. 1390.

His councillors urged him to descend towards the western border to intercept them; but he was impatient to return to England to his usual pleasures, and led back his army, contented with having retaliated the injuries done to his subjects by the Scots, without exacting any reparation for them, or taking any steps to prevent their repetition.

Like most weak monarchs he now attached himself to a favourite, the earl of Oxford, the head of the great family of the De Veres, a man of agreeable manners, but of no abilities; he created him marquis of Dublin and duke of Ireland, and, by thus raising him above the rest of the nobility, he excited in them a jealousy of which he soon reaped the bitter fruits. The duke of Gloucester had for a while been kept in check by his elder brother, the duke of Lancaster; but this latter, who had married a Spanish princess, and who fancied that he derived from that marriage some right to the throne of Castile, had gone thither to prosecute his claims, at the head of a large military force; and Gloucester, being thus left to carry on his schemes without hindrance, began to show the dangerous character of his ambition. He brought the most frivolous charges against the earl of Suffolk, the chancellor, one of the late king's most esteemed councillors; having procured his removal from his office, he compelled the parliament to appoint a commission of his own creatures to govern the kingdom; a measure which, though Richard was now of full age, in effect deprived him of all power or authority; and, as the chief judges unanimously pronounced this commission to be illegal, he and his adherents collected an armed force, with which they marched towards London, drove De Vere from the kingdom, banished some, and put to death others of the judges who had given this unfavourable sentence, and made themselves complete masters of the kingdom. It is impossible to say to what lengths the duke might not have proceeded, had not the duke of Lancaster returned from Spain shortly afterwards, where he had resigned all his pretensions to the throne of Castile for a large sum of money, and Richard, supported by him, recovered his authority. He had not learnt to make a good use of it. With thoughtless levity, he broke the promises which he made to his parliament, and dissipated the supplies which they granted him for the national defence, in feasting and luxury. The people saw, with daily increasing discontent, not only the cessation of its career of victory, but the decay of its trade and commerce, which as yet required the fostering vigilance of the monarch to secure their prosperity; and when the commons addressed to him a vigorous remonstrance against the evils which appeared to them the most grievous, he treated them with great disdain, and even caused the mover of the remonstrance, a member

of the name of Haxey; to be impeached as a traitor, and condemned; though the sentence was not carried into execution. He had been married but a few years, when the queen died; and as both England and France were now weary of the war which had lasted so long, negotiations were set on foot, which, though they did not lead to a permanent peace, resulted in a truce for twenty-five years; which Richard endeavoured to render more durable by marrying the French king's daughter, though she was a child only seven years old.

Unhappily, the truce and the connexion with France were unpopular with the nation; and the king's own conduct was not such as to command respect. He was not charged with any crimes; he was neither cruel nor licentious; but his whole time was given up to thoughtless revelry, and the chief affairs of the kingdom were, as before, entrusted to favourites; a conduct which, though the favourites themselves were such as were entitled to his affection, being his half-brothers, the sons of his mother by her first marriage, still gave Gloucester a handle to cabal a second time against his government. He carried his practices so far, that Richard believed, not without reason, that the struggle between them could only be terminated by the destruction of one; and when he had adopted this opinion, he took instant steps to save himself from being the victim. His other uncles coincided with him. With the full approbation of the dukes of Lancaster and York, he caused Gloucester to be arrested, and removed to Calais, where he was put to death; and some of his most powerful partisans were also executed or banished. The parliament cordially seconded all the king's measures, and went such lengths in showing their confidence in him that they voted him several important taxes for life; a favour which had not been granted to any preceding sovereign.

But the weakness of the king was such that it invited enemies from among his nearest relations. And there now arose against him one more formidable than the violent and hasty Gloucester. Henry, earl of Derby, the duke of Lancaster's eldest son, had been lately created duke of Hereford, in reward for his support of the king in his late contest. The duke of Norfolk had been equally ardent in the same cause; but, when their enemy was removed, these two nobles quarrelled, and in accordance with the practice of the times, the one formally challenged the other to single combat. A day was appointed, and lists were enclosed at Coventry for the encounter. The king and most of the nobility of the kingdom were present. But, before a blow was struck, the king suddenly interposed, banished the duke of Norfolk for life, and Hereford for ten years; which last sentence was afterwards enlarged into one of perpetual exile; and when the duke of Lancaster died, as he did

A.D. 1399.

shortly afterwards, Richard seized his estates, in spite of all the protestations which his cousin in exile could make against such an act of injustice.

The new duke of Lancaster was a prince of considerable abilities, and of high reputation as a warrior; and, finding that he could not procure what he considered his inalienable rights by peaceful means, he prepared to recover them by force. Richard, suspicious of no such danger, was absent in Ireland, whither he had gone to revenge the death of his cousin and heir, the earl of March, who had been slain in a skirmish with the natives, when the duke of Lancaster landed in Yorkshire, and soon collected an army of 60,000 men. Even the duke of York, his uncle, whom Richard had appointed guardian of the kingdom, took his part, and he had no difficulty in seizing some of the most important places in the island. Some of Richard's ministers he seized, and put to death; and so rapid was his progress towards supreme power, and so general was his popularity, that the army with which Richard returned from Ireland to oppose him, deserted in great numbers, till in a few days there were hardly 6000 men left round the royal standard. The unhappy king fled to the island of Anglesea, intending to escape from thence to Ireland or France; but he was persuaded by treachery to surrender to the earl of Northumberland, and was conducted to London. The duke of Lancaster compelled him to sign a deed, resigning his crown; and, not contented with that, convened a parliament, before whom he laid a long list of charges against his sovereign. It was received with unanimous approbation; but one man in the whole assembly, the bishop of Carlisle, ventured to raise his voice in defence of his master, seeking also to press the adherents of the aspiring duke with the argument that if Richard were deposed, it was not he, but the young earl of March, who was the next heir to the crown. His honest boldness was of no avail, the two houses of parliament voted Richard's deposition, and then the duke of Lancaster rose and claimed the crown as a descendant of Henry III. No one now ventured to reassert the notorious fact, which in the next generation gave rise to the civil wars that desolated the island, that, if the throne was vacant, there was a nearer heir than he. He was declared king, under the title of Henry IV.; and thus the reign of Richard ended on the 30th of September, 1399, when he had been king twenty-two years.

The peers, prompted, no doubt, by Henry, resolved that Richard should be kept in confinement; but there had already been one sad example in his family that it is but a short road from the prison of princes to their grave; and so it proved in this instance. He was removed from one castle to another, and at the beginning of the

next year he was conveyed to Pontefract. The manner of his death was not certainly known. Some reported that he had been murdered by sir Piers Exton, and others of his guards; but the more general, and probably the better founded belief was, that he was starved to death by Henry's order. His body was conveyed to London, and the face was exposed to view, that there might be no doubt of his death, and Henry himself, with singular audacity, attended his funeral.

His chief fault appears to have been a lightness of character, which made him prefer the suggestions of youthful councillors to the graver advice of more experienced ministers; an addiction to trifling amusement, instead of that attention to weighty affairs which was required of him by his situation; and a desire at times to act in independence of the law, which he saw disregarded by his most powerful subjects, and which he found quite impotent to protect himself. But his misfortunes arose far more from the turbulent ambition of his nearest relatives, some one or other of whom was plotting against him from the day of his accession to that of his death.

The political circumstances of his reign are but of little importance, and many of them are enveloped in great obscurity and uncertainty; but in the domestic history of the nation events began to take place of more lasting interest. It was now that literature began to assert its claim to notice. There had been poets and romancers for several generations; and some of their works exist to the present day, being mostly translations from French authors. But the first great original poet of whom England can boast was Geoffrey Chaucer, who was born indeed in the preceding reign, and who had been favourably noticed, and employed in foreign embassies by Edward, but whose works were probably mostly written after Richard came to the throne; and that unfortunate prince eminently deserves the character of having been a steady and discerning patron of literary men, suggesting subjects to him, and to Gower, another poet of inferior merit, and honouring with especial favour the spirit-stirring accounts by Froissart of the immortal deeds of his father and his grandfather.

More important still was the influence exercised on the national character by the first church reformer, John Wickliffe. He, too, was born in the early part of the last reign; and his first controversy with the friars took place within a few years of the battle of Poitiers; but it was not till the commencement of Richard's reign that he began to preach openly against the pope himself; and the new king had been some months on the throne when Wickliffe was summoned to defend himself before the bishop of London, though he was so vigorously supported by the duke of Lancaster, that he

A.D. 1400.

escaped with a severe reprimand. The failure of this attack upon him encouraged him to greater boldness. His country cannot claim for him the honour of having been the first person in Europe to protest against the corruptions of the Church of Rome. In the valleys of the Alps the Vaudois had for ages preserved their simple faith; and even in Italy itself, as we learn from Dante,* the number of heretics was very considerable. But he was the first Englishman who openly declared the thoughts which many had already cherished in their hearts; and he was soon followed by a band of disciples, to whom the Romanists gave the name Lollards, from a Latin word signifying tares,† and who were eager in their defence of his opinions, and their attachment to his person. In some of his principles he rather resembled the Puritans of Charles's time, than the more temperate leaders of the Reformation, as it was established under Edward VI., protesting against the robes of the priesthood, against church music and organs, and against ecclesiastical endowments, and insisting that the clergy should maintain themselves with their own hands.

Before his death he gave the Church of Rome a blow, from which it never recovered, and placed his own doctrines on a foundation which could not be shaken, by translating the Scriptures into the mother tongue of the people. Even before the conquest parts of the Bible, and especially the Gospels, had been translated into Anglo-Saxon; but the Normans had introduced so many French words into the language, that the pure Anglo-Saxon had become obsolete, and almost unintelligible; so that the nation in general was as little acquainted with the Bible as if it had been still confined to its original language, and to the Latin Vulgate; but this new translation, executed with great skill and learning, speedily diffused a knowledge of, and a still more universal desire for, the truth, and thus paved the way for that more general reformation, which a century and a half later finally emancipated half Europe from the shackles in which superstition and imposture had so long bound her, and established in our land the fulness of religious knowledge and religious liberty.

* "Ed egli a me; ' Qui son gli eresiarche
Co' lor seguaci d'ogni setta, e molto
Più che uon credi, son le tombe carche.
Simile qui con simile è sepolto:
E i monimenti son più e men caldi: '"

Inferno, ix. 43.

" He answer thus returned:
' The arch-heretics are here, accompanied
By every sect their followers; and much more,
Than thou believest, the tombs are freighted: like
With like is buried; and the monuments
Are different in degrees of heat.' "

Carey's Translation.

+ Lolium.

CHAPTER XIX.

HENRY IV.

A.D.
1399
1413.

HENRY IV. was thirty years of age when he thus seized upon the throne of his cousin. His short reign, unmarked by any great events of foreign politics, is fixed in the memories of most people rather by the dramatist than by the historian. To the latter it presents little more than a series of conspiracies and insurrections, excited, not unnaturally, by his usurpation, but all put down with singular good fortune and unvarying success. And the success was deserved if not by the sincerity and equity, at all events by the resolution and consummate prudence of Henry himself.

His first step, as he found the nobles unfriendly to and distrustful of him, was to seek to conciliate the still more opulent and formidable body of the clergy. His father had been Wickliffe's most powerful supporter, and it is probable that he himself was secretly inclined to his doctrines; but, to gain the good will of the Church, he now did not hesitate to proclaim his intention to support the established religion, and promoted and gave his assent to an act for the suppression of all heresies and the punishment of all heretical teachers, and, in conformity with its provisions, in the second year of his reign, a London priest, of the name of William Sawtre, was burnt for denying the popish doctrine of transubstantiation, being the first martyr to the cruelty of the Church of Rome in this island.*

It was evident that the only foreign enemy whom Henry had to apprehend was the French king, whose daughter had been married to Richard, and who made no secret of his indignation at the murder of his son-in-law. To appease him Henry proposed an alliance between one of his own sons and the widowed queen, which was rejected with disdain. After much negotiation Isabella was permitted to return to France, but, though delighted to recover his daughter, Charles's hostility to the new dynasty was in no degree appeased, and, though no declaration of war between the

* In the reign of Henry III., a clergyman had been burnt for renouncing his religion and becoming a Jew, in order to marry a Jewish woman; but this case, though equally indefensible in principle, differs from that of those whose only crime was not a renunciation of Christianity, but a difference from the Church of Rome on some of its peculiar and newly-invented doctrines.

A.D. 1400.

two countries took place, the knowledge which the French nobles possessed of their sovereign's feelings, prompted them to insult and injure the English on every opportunity; and the count of St. Pol, who had married Richard's sister, sent Henry an open defiance, and he and his allies, collecting a squadron of ships, made descents on the Isle of Wight, burnt Plymouth, took a number of English vessels in the Channel, and carried them as prizes into the French ports.

These insults caused great discontent among the people, who remembered the especial pride which Edward had taken in his navy, and the triumphant manner in which he had asserted his right to the sovereignty of the seas. To quiet their murmurs, Henry undertook an expedition into Scotland, which, as it produced no results, failed to add to his reputation or popularity; but when, the next year, the Scots retaliated by an invasion of England, they were encountered on the border by the earl of Northumberland, and his son Henry Percy, surnamed Hotspur. In a battle which ensued on Homildon Hill, the English archers decided the victory before the men-at-arms could come to blows; the Scots were utterly defeated, and their leader, Douglas, was taken prisoner.

On the Welsh frontier Henry had greater trouble. A Welsh gentleman, named Owen Glendower, descended from the ancient princes of the country, exasperated at having been deprived of his property by lord Gray de Ruthyn, one of the king's favourite nobles, and at being refused all redress, raised the standard of insurrection, defeated the barons who opposed him, took prisoners lord Gray and sir Edmund Mortimer, a baron nearly related to the royal family, as the uncle of the earl of March, the male heir of Edward III., and then, retiring among his native mountains, eluded every attempt on the part of the king and his generals to bring him to action, with such skill and uniform success, that his unvarying good fortune was commonly imputed to witchcraft. He even ventured at last to declare himself sovereign of Wales. The king of France received his ambassadors as those of an independent prince, and, making an alliance with him, sent a French force to assist him, which, however, soon became disgusted with the country and its rude inhabitants, and, after aiding in the capture of Caermarthen, returned home. At last the king sent his eldest son, the prince of Wales, Harry of Monmouth, as he was commonly called by his contemporaries, from the place of his nativity, to conduct the war; and he, with a military skill beyond his years, though unable to bring Owen to a pitched battle, on the other hand gave him no opportunity of attacking himself or any detachments of his army, and, advancing steadily and cautiously, gradually narrowed the resources of the Welsh chieftain, till after four or

five years of incessant warfare, he cooped him up among the mountainous wilds around Snowdon, where, though he still maintained the appearance of hostility, he was unable to give it any effect, but remained inactive, though unsubdued, for the rest of his life.

A.D. 1403. In the fourth year of Henry's reign a most formidable insurrection broke out, which shook his throne to its foundations and nearly overturned it. He owed his crown chiefly to the earl of Northumberland, who had not only supported him with all his power, which, in the north of England, was almost equal to that of the sovereign, but who was also the very person who had prevailed on Richard to put himself into his hands, and had then treacherously surrendered him to his rival. Henry, however, now gave this powerful noble deep offence, by refusing him permission to ransom Mortimer, who was nearly related to him, and who, as has been already mentioned, was taken prisoner by Glendower. Despising his jealousy of the young earl of March, indignant at his ingratitude, and conscious of his own power, Northumberland sent the king a formal defiance, charging him with having obtained the crown by perjury and murder, and with an arbitrary and illegal exercise of the power thus nefariously obtained; disowning all allegiance to him, and declaring open war against him. Henry levied a force to meet his rebel subject, and the two armies met at Shrewsbury, each consisting of about 14,000 men. The rebel force would have been larger had time been allowed for Glendower to join it, as he was hastening to do, and had not Northumberland been suddenly taken ill, so that a division remained with him, while his son Hotspur undertook, with the remainder, to give battle to the royalists. The battle was obstinately contested. On the one side Hotspur and Douglas, to whom the Percies had given his liberty, and who now fought on their side, performed prodigies of valour. On the other, Henry himself, and his youthful son, who, on this day, though only fifteen years of age, gave ample promise of his future renown, showed themselves intrepid knights and skilful generals, but their exertions would probably have been fruitless if Percy had not been slain by a random arrow, and his men were too much disheartened by the loss of their leader to maintain the combat. On his fall they gave way, many were slain and many were taken. Douglas fell into the king's hands, who treated him, as a foreigner, with courtesy; but the English nobles, who had fought under Percy's banner, and who were taken prisoners, he put to death as traitors.

Henry now flattered himself that he had put down all his enemies; but he was deceived; no one had ever more cause to say,

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

A.D. 1411.

Enemies were continually rising up on all sides, and nothing but the want of concert between them saved him from being overwhelmed. One insurrection was raised by the earl of Nottingham and the archbishop of York ; but they were seized and delivered up to Henry, who, in spite of the remonstrances of judge Gascoyne, who urged that they had a right to be tried by their peers, put them both to death by the hand of the executioner. Another was excited by the earl of Northumberland, who fell in battle against the king's forces ; and so many other conspiracies were formed by persons of inferior rank, believing or pretending to believe that Richard was not actually dead, that at last an act was passed, making it a capital crime to allege that he was still alive.

It was not to be expected that the reign of a sovereign whose position was at all times so critical, could pass without his parliament taking advantage of his difficulties ; accordingly we find that the commons (who had the chief occasion to struggle for their privileges, as their equality with the lords, as members of the legislative body, was not yet completely acknowledged) asserted their pretensions with constantly increasing vigour and success, establishing their right to freedom of debate, which had been grievously infringed by the imprisonment of Haxey, in the late reign, and to a control of the king's ministers, and even of the details of the king's expenditure of the revenue, and procuring a declaration from him that their advice and assent was requisite in the enactment of statutes.

Douglas, the most valiant of the Scottish nobles, as has been mentioned, had become Henry's prisoner at the battle of Shrewsbury ; and, two or three years afterwards, the king was relieved from all apprehension of any renewal of hostilities by Scotland by an accident which threw the heir to that kingdom into his power. King Robert III., justly afraid of the unscrupulous ambition of his brother, the duke of Albany, who had already murdered his eldest son, sent his second son, afterwards king James I., to France for greater safety ; but the vessel in which the young prince sailed was taken by an English cruiser, and, though the two countries were at peace, Henry did not scruple to detain him in confinement, though he made some amends for the injustice of such conduct by giving him an excellent education.

He had been king twelve years when the quarrels between the dukes of Orleans and Burgundy, each of whom sought his assistance, and offered to purchase it by enabling him to recover some of the provinces which had belonged to his predecessors, induced him to think of repeating the attempts of Edward upon France. He made a treaty with the duke of Burgundy, and sent his second son, Thomas, duke of Clarence, with a moderate force into Nor-

mandy. But his own health began to decay so rapidly that he was unable to prosecute farther any enterprise in that kingdom.

Before he died he was anxious to procure a parliamentary settlement of the crown on his posterity. It would seem that he already anticipated the revolt which subsequently drove his grandson from the throne; and, as the earl of March, the nearest heir of Edward III., could only claim through his mother, he himself projected the introduction of the Salic law into England, and was desirous that the act to be passed should exclude his own daughters from the succession. But the claim of the English monarchs to the throne of France, which depended wholly on the rights of Edward the Third's mother, Isabella, was still popular in the kingdom, and it was felt that the establishment of such a rule in England must be for ever fatal to any reassertion of that claim, so that he was forced to consent to a more general settlement of the throne on his posterity. He had been subject to epileptic fits, and their increasing violence gradually undermined his health, till in March, 1413, he died, at Westminster, in the forty-sixth year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign, leaving behind him the reputation of an ambitious and unscrupulous, but vigorous and able prince, but not having lived long enough to efface, by the prosperity of his administration, or the renown of his achievements, the recollection of the crimes by which he had obtained and established his authority.

CHAPTER XX.

HENRY V.

A.D.
1413
1422.



F we are to take our impressions of history from perhaps the most universally known of all Shakespeare's plays, in which, no doubt, he followed the early chroniclers, we must believe that the youth of the new sovereign had been spent in one unvaried round of lawless profligacy and debauchery, which he, all the time, cherished a fixed purpose of abandoning as soon as his father's death should change his condition of a subject into one invested with the graver duties and responsibilities of a king. But (though we might support this view by the somewhat parallel case of Frederic the Great, the dissipated childishness of whose early years forms a similar contrast to the severe energy which distinguished him as a

ruler; whose youthful friends calculated, as securely as Falstaff himself, on a golden age of riot and licentiousness; though they, like him, found themselves completely deceived in their expectations, and summarily discarded); the certain facts of his career in his father's reign are sufficient to prove that the tales which our great dramatist has stereotyped in all our minds are gross exaggerations, though not wholly without foundation, as is proved by the incident in which chief justice Gascoyne was concerned. It is recorded that, when one of his friends was brought before the chief justice for some offence, the prince appeared by his side to give countenance to his cause, imperiously demanding his release; and, when his demand was disregarded, that he drew his sword, and seemed to threaten the judge with personal violence; but Gascoyne, undismayed by his rank, at once committed him to prison for his contempt of the king's court, and he had sufficient sense and good feeling to confess the impropriety of his conduct, and to submit to its punishment.

It is quite certain that his affability and generosity of disposition had already gained for him universal popularity with the multitude, and that the intrepidity and military skill, of which he had given proof at Shrewsbury, and in the tedious campaigns which had broken the power of Glendower, had led the more reflecting part of the community to form high expectations of national glory and prosperity under his sway. His first acts strengthened this favourable impression. He continued in office the most trusted ministers of his father (who had been a prince of great sagacity and discernment of character), and received judge Gascoyne into his especial favour, bidding him continue to exercise the same intrepid impartiality in the administration of justice that he had himself experienced; and he released the earl of March, whom his father, from jealousy of his superior claim to the throne, had constantly kept in confinement, and treated him with uniform friendship and confidence.

It is probable that from the moment of his accession he contemplated a renewal of the war with France; but some of the internal affairs of his own country first demanded his attention, and one of his first steps was to sign a truce for a year with that kingdom. The sect of the Lollards was increasing in number and power, and, not content with reforming the Church alone, promulgated political opinions which were dangerous to the constitution; and it was now more formidable from being headed by a baron of high character and considerable wealth and influence, sir John Oldcastle, who, from a barony possessed by his wife, was also called lord Cobham. Archbishop Arundel was a bigot, inclined to scruple at no severity calculated in his opinion to promote the

interests of the Church ; and the doctrines and proceedings of the Lollards were such that it was not difficult to persuade Henry, who, like most princes and statesmen, looked more at the political than at the religious aspect of the question, that such a sect must be put down. The king, however, who had a personal regard for Oldcastle,* determined to try the gentle arts of persuasion in the first place, and himself endeavoured by arguments to convince the knight of his errors ; but his opinions were too deeply rooted to be shaken even by a royal controversialist, and at last, though with great reluctance, Henry allowed the primate to proceed according to the severe statute passed in his father's reign. Oldcastle was tried for heresy, convicted, and condemned to the flames ; but he escaped from the Tower, where he was confined, and collected a numerous body of followers, with whose aid he endeavoured to seize the person of the king and to make himself master of London ; but the king secured the gates of the city, and easily dispersed the insurgents. Some were executed ; but Oldcastle himself escaped. A few years afterwards, encouraged by a Scottish inroad, he emerged from his concealment, and tried to excite a second insurrection ; but, when he found that the Scots were repelled, he fled into Wales, where he was taken prisoner, and, as an addition to his former sentence, was condemned to be hung as a traitor before he was burnt as a heretic. His fanaticism must at last have amounted to something like insanity, for at the gallows he assured his followers that he should rise again the third day ; and the failure of this prophecy not only threw discredit on the prophet, but was for some time a material discouragement to the further spread of his doctrines ; while the proved treasonableness of some of his principles assisted those who were too glad to confound heresy with disloyalty in procuring the enactment of more severe laws for the suppression of all opposition to the Church, with which they were enabled to assert with some plausibility that the safety of the constitution and of the throne was identified. Yet it is evident that the very parliament which passed these laws was greatly imbued with Wickliffe's political principles, for, when the king demanded a supply for the war with France, which he was meditating, they urged him, as they had formerly urged his father, to seize all the ecclesiastical revenues in the kingdom, and to apply them to the necessities of the state.

^{A.D.} The condition of France at this moment was such as might
^{1414.} well have tempted a prince even less under the influence of historical recollections and of personal ambition to attack it. The

* In the plays before the time of Shakespeare, which had for their subject the riotous habits of prince Henry, the character which he attributes to Falstaff was assigned to John Oldcastle. The real sir John Falstaff, as will be seen hereafter, was in truth a knight, distinguished in the French wars.

A.D. 1415.

king, Charles VI., was sunk in a state of hopeless imbecility, the dauphin was wholly devoted to that course of debauchery which before the end of the next year put an end to his life, and the most powerful princes and nobles kept the nation in a continued ferment by their quarrels and struggles for power and superiority. To such a height did these miserable animosities rise that the duke of Burgundy caused his partisans to assassinate the duke of Orleans in the public street; and, some years after the time of which we are now speaking, he himself was assassinated in the presence of the Dauphin.

Henry availed himself of these divisions to negotiate with the leaders of both parties; with the adherents of Burgundy, and with those of the late duke of Orleans, who were known as the Armagnacs, from the title of the count d'Armagnac, his father-in-law. He prolonged the existing truce till February, 1415, and amused the duke of Burgundy with a proposal to marry his daughter; while of the royalist party he demanded the hand of the king's daughter, the princess Katharine, with an enormous dowry, and the restitution of many of the largest and richest provinces of France, which at one time or another had belonged to the English kings. The French government was willing to agree to many of the conditions required, and even to cede Aquitaine to England, but Henry refused to submit to any abatement of his claims, and in March, 1415, broke off the negotiations which he had probably only commenced with a view to get time to complete his preparations, and declared war against France. He was delayed a few months by the discovery of a conspiracy on the part of his own cousin, the earl of Cambridge, to place the earl of March on the throne. An inquiry into the circumstances resulted in the acquittal of March himself of all knowledge of the conspiracy, and in the condemnation and execution of Cambridge; but it consumed so much time that it was the middle of August before the king sailed from Southampton, and landed at the mouth of the Seine with 30,000 men. He at once laid siege to Harfleur, a town of great military strength and commercial importance, on the right bank of the river. So vigorous was the resistance which it made that it detained him above a month before its walls, and the unwholesomeness of the neighbouring marshes brought on disease in his army, aggravated by immoderate indulgence in the fruit with which the country abounded, that cost him almost as many men as the casualties of war. It is especially recorded that he employed cannons in this siege, which terrified the citizens by the vast stones which they threw into the town; and, perhaps, this may be looked upon as the first certain instance of their use in modern warfare. It is probable that in the infancy of the gunner's art they

caused more alarm than damage, for the same piece could only be fired a very few times in a day ; and they were too cumbrous, and too difficult to be moved, to be as yet available for field warfare. Sending his sick and wounded back to England, and leaving a strong garrison in Harfleur, he quitted that place at the beginning of October at the head of only half the number of men that he had brought with him not two months before. Prudence would have dictated contentment with the advantage already gained, and a suspension of further operations till the succeeding year ; but he conceived his honour concerned in avoiding all appearance of timidity, and determined to penetrate to Calais to pass the winter in that fortress. The French repeated the tactics of Philip before the battle of Crecy. When Henry arrived on the banks of the Somme he found the bridges broken down, the right bank of the river guarded, and his own army watched by one infinitely greater in numbers, and more superior still in its condition, and in cavalry, which in those days constituted the main force of every army. He marched up the left bank for many days ; at last, on the 19th of October, he found an unguarded ford near the town of St. Quentin ; without a moment's delay he crossed the river, and proceeded on his march towards Calais.

The nominal command of the French army belonged to the lord d'Albret, the constable. But there were present also several princes of the blood who thought that their rank exempted them from obeying the commands of any leader ; and who agreed with him in nothing but his rashness and presumption. There was in that host one man of great military experience and reputation, earned in the Italian wars, the marshal Bourcicault : but his advice and warnings were disregarded, as well as all the lessons that might have been learnt from Crecy and from Poitiers. At this last battle the duke de Berri had been actually present in his boyhood, and the only instruction the military council derived from the disasters of the previous age was conveyed in his exhortation not to permit the king to be concerned in the approaching conflict, because it was better to lose the battle than the battle and the king too. Not that in reality they had any idea of losing the battle. They were so confident of the result that they sent a letter to the king to inform him that they intended to fight him, and to offer him the choice of time and place. He replied that he should march straight to Calais, and that they would find him at all times ready for battle should they attempt to bar his road. But, in spite of this spirited reply, he was in fact so conscious of his danger that he offered to make peace, reducing his demands to the restitution of Guienne and Ponthieu, and being willing to take a smaller dowry with the princess. But the French princes refused to cede him any territories

A.D. 1415.

whatever; and demanded the surrender of Harfleur, and the abandonment of all pretensions to the French throne, as the only condition on which they would grant him leave to pursue his march. He disdained terms which seemed to him to involve a loss of honour, and pressed onwards. They pursued him, marching on a line nearly parallel to his own; and, as he was forced to turn a little out of his way in order to avoid Peronne and other fortresses of less importance, they got before him; and on the night of the 24th he found them posted in his front, near the village of Agincourt. His army was now reduced to about 12,000 men. The French had no less than 14,000 cavalry, and their entire force amounted to at least five times the number of the English. Many of the contemporary authors double this disproportion; but it was not their number alone that made the French army so imposing. In that splendid host were three of the king's sons, and the king of Sicily. With the single exception of the duke of Burgundy, all the princes of royal blood, all the nobles of the greatest military reputation and the widest territorial influence were there; all had hastened to the spot which was to restore their brilliancy to the standards tarnished at Crecy and Poitiers, eager to bear their share in the certain triumph of the morrow.

And truly, if fearless valour could alone have ensured the victory, well might Henry have despaired; but, fortunately for his small band, his enemies were destitute of military skill, discipline, or obedience. The night was wet and cold, and when the day dawned, it was seen that the constable had marshalled his dense battalions between two woods, on a plain so narrow as to allow no space for extending his front or manœuvring his cavalry, while the ground in front had been so broken up by foraging parties during the night, and by the rain, as to render that splendid branch of his army almost immovable and useless. Remembering that at Crecy and at Poitiers the French had been the assailants, he determined now to receive the attack. His army was divided into three large bodies under separate commanders. But the French nobles, feeling sure that the front line would be the only one engaged, and eager to bear a part in the contest, quitted their men, and all pressed forward to what they expected would be the post of honour: thus preventing the infantry and archers from taking up the position assigned to them by the constable.

It was about ten o'clock on the 25th of October when Henry, having heard mass, and having addressed a short speech of encouragement to his soldiers, dismounted from his horse, and on foot led his men against the enemy. Twice he halted to allow them time to take breath and to dress their line; and after the second halt, as they were now within shot of the French ranks, the whole army

raised a shout, the archers poured forth a volley, and the battle began. Henry had commanded each archer to supply himself with a stake pointed at each end, which was easily fixed in the ground, (so that the whole body could retire, if there were need, behind an impregnable palisade,) and easily removed, so as to form no obstacle to their advance. The count de Vendôme, with above 2000 men-at-arms, prepared to imitate the charge of Randolph at Bannockburn, hoping to trample them down by the superior weight of his cavalry; but he was received with such a storm of arrows that numbers refused to face it, and turned their backs. Many of the horses stuck fast in the deep clay, many were slain; and not above 160 horsemen ever reached the spot where the archers were standing. The archers retired behind their stakes, and the assailants who persevered in the attack were only the more exposed to their deadly aim. They were repulsed in disorder; the archers dropped their bows, sprang forward from behind their barricade, rushing on the retreating foe, slaughtered them without mercy, and quickly retired into their former position: then, taking up their stakes, they advanced with the rest of the army upon the enemy, whom the attack already repelled had thrown into entire confusion. The very numbers of the French impeded them, crowded as they were in one disorderly mass; and the second and third lines, destitute of their commanders, who were fighting in the front, stood still in motionless helplessness, ignorant how to support or assist their comrades. Individual knights displayed, as the warriors of their nation at all times have done, the most brilliant valour. The duke d'Alençon in his last charge slew the duke of York, and cleft the crown upon the king's helmet. And many another knight and noble compelled Henry to fight hard for his own life, and to give his followers an example of personal courage and unwearied exertion; but method, discipline, and order, there were none in the French ranks. When the English, having utterly broken the first line, reached the second, disheartened by its defeat and embarrassed by its flying relics, the third, though more numerous than the whole army of their enemies, fled without striking a blow. At that moment a small squadron* under a Burgundian knight, Robinet de Bonnerville, who was afterwards severely punished by the duke of Burgundy for his exploit, broke in on the English rear, and began to pillage the baggage. They were soon put to flight; but on their first appearance, Henry, dismayed at the attack of this new enemy, of whom he could not ascertain the strength, gave orders to slay the prisoners, and many were put to the sword before it was ascertained that there was no danger to be apprehended; then the order was recalled, and the rest were saved to enrich their captors by their ransom.

* Most accounts call them peasants. Siemond, a corps d'armée. Vol. xii. p. 487.

A.D. 1417.

Such was the battle of Agincourt, the last and the most fatal to the French of those great victories which make the history of the middle ages appear so marvellous to a modern reader. The Welsh captain, David Gam, whom Henry had sent to reconnoitre the enemy on the preceding night, is said to have reported their numbers as enough to be killed, enough to be taken prisoners, and enough to run away; and the killed and the prisoners furnished a melancholy catalogue for their countrymen. Besides the inferior soldiers, 8000 men of gentle birth lay stretched upon the plain; and among them seven princes of the blood royal, and 120 great territorial lords. Among thousands of prisoners of the ordinary class were counted 1500 of knightly rank, with the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon at their head; and France seemed at one blow deprived of all the leaders under whom she might have hoped to resist her conqueror or retrieve her fortune.

The next day Henry continued his march to Calais, and returned to England, where he was received with enthusiastic joy by the whole nation; but the finances of the kingdom were exhausted for the time, and a truce was concluded between the two nations, which lasted nearly two years. The interval was judiciously employed by Henry in promoting the commercial prosperity of his people by wise regulations for the encouragement of trade, and by a treaty with Flanders, of equal benefit to both countries. At the same time he was carrying on negotiations with the different parties in France, to whom the misfortunes of their nation had not taught the necessity of union, but who all showed themselves equally willing to purchase the triumph of their party by the betrayal of the interests of their country. The palace itself was divided by faction. The queen, Isabel of Bavaria, claimed the regency of the kingdom during the imbecility of her husband, in opposition to the new dauphin, and, by the aid of the duke of Burgundy, for a while obtained the chief authority in the capital. The duke of Burgundy, to whom Flanders belonged, was in close alliance with Henry; but, as the councillors of the dauphin, to whom the greater part of the kingdom adhered, were only the more hostile to him for that circumstance, he resolved to renew the war, and in August 1417, again landed in Normandy. In the course of the next year he made himself master of many important towns, still continuing to negotiate, and making and receiving various proposals for a lasting peace. The terms were almost agreed upon, when they were broken off by a reconciliation, which took place between the duke of Burgundy and the dauphin, that seemed to have for its object a union of the whole nation against the common enemy, but which proved only a trap laid for the duke of Burgundy, who was shortly

afterwards assassinated by the dauphin's officers, in his presence, in an interview at Montereau. This atrocity increased the distractions of France, and laid it completely defenceless at the feet of Henry. The new duke of Burgundy, thinking of nothing but of revenging his father's murder upon its authors, succeeded to his place in the French councils with increased power, and in 1420 made peace with Henry, in the name of the whole kingdom.

In this treaty, which was known as the treaty of Troyes, it was agreed that Henry should marry the princess Katherine; that he should be declared heir to Charles VI., after whose death the two nations should be for ever united under one king; and that the armies of Charles and of the duke of Burgundy should combine with the English to compel the dauphin to accede to this arrangement.

The marriage was celebrated with great pomp on the 2nd of June; and then, as the party of the dauphin was still in possession of many large districts of the kingdom, and of many important fortresses, Henry returned to England with his queen, to have her crowned at Westminster, and to collect another army to complete the reduction of his newly-acquired inheritance. He had still a hard task to accomplish, for the common people were more patriotic than their rulers, and viewed their threatened subjection to a people, whom they had learnt to look upon as their national enemies, with an indignation which was increased by the arrogance of the English, who would not stoop to conciliate those of whom they considered themselves the conquerors. They were encouraged in their resistance by the event of a battle at Baugé, in Anjou, in which 7000 Scots, in the service of the dauphin, under the command of the earl of Buchan, defeated and slew the duke of Clarence; but this was only a momentary gleam of success, and, on Henry's return, he proceeded steadily in his work of conquest. Town after town was taken, when on a sudden he was attacked by some disease, which is imperfectly described by the historians of the day, but which baffled all medical skill; and on the 31st of August, 1422, he died, with his last breath entreating his friends to continue to his son, an infant nine months old, the same faithful loyalty which he himself had always experienced, leaving the regency of France to his next brother, the duke of Bedford, and that of England to his younger brother, the duke of Gloucester, both of whom he enjoined, above all things, to preserve their alliance with the duke of Burgundy, and not to release the princes of the blood, who had been taken prisoners at Agincourt, till his son had arrived at full age, and was competent to govern his kingdom himself.

In his character as a ruler Henry greatly resembled Edward the

A.D. 1422.

Third. A similar ambition excited him to the same dream of conquest, and was supported by equal courage and military skill, and by perhaps even greater statesmanlike prudence and sagacity. Owing to the imbecility of the French monarch, and the factions which in consequence distracted France, he met with even greater success; and it is likely that, if he had lived, he might for a time have completed the union of the two crowns. His greater authority and pre-eminent reputation would probably have averted the disasters from which the duke of Bedford, brave and able as he was, could not preserve his deputed power; but such a result, however flattering to the national pride, would have been a grievous calamity to both nations. It might have led to the dismemberment of France; but it could never have tended to the permanent aggrandizement of England. The English subjects of his son, who saw town after town, and province after province slipping from their grasp, may have repined at the loss of their victorious king, thinking, in the spirit of the ancient poet,—

"Nimium vobis Romana propago

*Visa potens, Superi, propria hæc si dona fuissent."**

But we, judging after the event which we can estimate more correctly by being further removed from it, may rather pronounce that, as he lived long enough for his own glory, so he died at a fortunate moment for the prosperity of his natural dominions, and the safety of his anticipated inheritance.

CHAPTER XXI.

HENRY VI.

A.D.
1422
1435.



It is singular, considering the general propensity, and, we may almost say, desire, that exists among mankind to believe the qualities of the mind, as well as those of the person, in some degree hereditary, and to trace in the children not only the lineaments, but the disposition, the virtues, and the talents of the parents, to observe how greatly such a theory is at variance with the fact, and how very seldom in the history of the world an illustrious father has left behind him a son qualified by equal or similar abilities to

* The words of Virgil, in lamentation for Marcellus, who likewise died in early manhood. Translated by Dryden:—

*"The Gods too high had raised the Roman state,
Were but their gifts as permanent as great!"*

A.D. 1422.

imitate his example, or to adorn his memory. But though the resemblance, which we eagerly look for, usually fails to be found, the contrast has scarcely ever been so strongly marked as in the case of the sovereign whose reign we are now proceeding to describe. His father had been an ambitious and valiant prince, of great genius for war and for government, gracious and magnanimous, but, like conquerors in general, indifferent to human suffering and bloodshed when necessary to the execution of his plans. The son was humble and peaceful, utterly destitute of commanding abilities, and at times even of the natural faculties which are given to almost all the human race; meek and pious, seeking the only distinction which keeps his name alive in the respectful recollection of later generations in his zeal for religion and education, and in the noble colleges,* which he founded for their promotion. One who, in more quiet or more ignorant times, would probably have been canonized as a saint, but who, in any age, would have been unfit to rule a kingdom, and never so unfit as at a time when, together with his crown, he inherited instant war abroad, the result of his father's ambition, and, at a later period, civil war at home, the still more bitter fruit of his grandfather's usurpation.

He was, as has been already said, but nine months old when he became king of England; and his father had bequeathed his guardianship to the earl of Warwick, the most powerful baron and the most renowned warrior in the kingdom. This nomination was ratified by the parliament, which had greatly increased in power and authority under the two last kings, one being occupied in defending his defective title against conspirators, and the other being compelled by the want of supplies for his foreign wars to conciliate the good will of those who had the power of granting or withholding them; but it refused to ratify his other appointments, or to admit his constitutional right to make them; and, instead of calling either the duke of Bedford or Gloucester regent, it named the former protector of the kingdom, giving him a title, as was conceived, of inferior authority, while the other was to be his deputy during his absence in France.

These arrangements were scarcely completed, when Charles VI. died. He was buried at St. Denis; and at the conclusion of the ceremony the herald invited the bystanders to pray for the soul of the late monarch, and for the prosperity of the new one, Henry, king of France and England. On the other hand, the Armagnac party saluted the dauphin as king, by the title of Charles VII. He at once assumed the royal authority, issued ordinances as the sovereign, and was gladly acknowledged at Poitiers, Rochelle, and other important towns in the west, though the joy with which

Nov.
1422.

* In 1441 he founded Eton College, and King's College, Cambridge.

A.D. 1423.

he was received at Rochelle was somewhat damped by the falling in of the hotel where he was, which was unable to support the weight of the crowds that flocked thither to do him homage. Many persons were killed, and he himself was slightly injured by the accident. Charles was at this time nearly nineteen years old, of an indolent and careless character, not easily nor deeply affected by either reverses or successes, but for many years wholly abandoned to indolence and pleasure. At a subsequent period he seems on a sudden to have entirely changed his character: and for the last twenty years of his reign he displayed as much energy in reforming abuses, and re-establishing order and prosperity in his kingdom, as he had previously shown indifference to his own disgrace, and to his people's misery.

It was evident that the substitution of a king who was at the head of an opposing army, for one who was so wholly in the hands of the English as the late sovereign, greatly added to their difficulties in the prosecution of the war; and Bedford immediately applied himself with great prudence and address to counterbalance this unfavourable event by new and important alliances. The chief support of the English in France was the duke of Burgundy, who was likely to be more hostile to Charles VII., whom he looked upon as the immediate cause of his father's murder, than he had been to Charles VI.; and Bedford hoped not only to cement the alliance with him more firmly than ever, by marrying one of his sisters, but also to make him the means of gaining over the duke of Brittany, by engaging him to give another sister in marriage to the comte de Richemont, the duke's brother. It was natural for him to derive fresh hopes from the success of these negotiations; but, though he was far from suspecting it, the ground was, from the very first, hollow beneath his feet; for, at the very moment that these two French dukes were thus forming alliances with him, they were looking forward to the moment when they should renounce them, and making a secret treaty by which they agreed to remain friends to one another after they should be reconciled to Charles VII. In like manner, though the Parisians sent a deputation to England to do homage to Henry, and to solicit reinforcements to enable them to expel the adherents of Charles from the Isle of France, the main body of the citizens murmured at the foreign yoke to which their leaders submitted, and a conspiracy was formed, in which even some members of the deputation were concerned, to deliver the city to its native king.

Bedford also released James, the young king of Scotland, who had been detained in England ever since the time when he fell into the hands of Henry IV., and united him in marriage to a princess of the English royal family, in the hope that when estab-

lished on his throne, he would be able to recall those of his subjects who formed a very important part of Charles's army.

The war, however, went on for some time very languidly. It could hardly be said that there was a regular army on either side; and the principal military operations, if they deserve such a title, were executed by independent captains, whose attachment to either party was little more than nominal, and whose main object was to maintain their men and to enrich themselves by the pillage of the district in which they were stationed. The leaders of both parties, seeking to gain the affections of the nation, endeavoured, as far as they could, to remedy the evils which such a state of affairs produced; but their efforts and commands had but slight effect, and seldom had any country been reduced to a more miserable condition than France was now by the combination of foreign and civil war. Pillage and conflagration raged almost unchecked over the whole country. Towns were destroyed, agriculture was neglected, the population wasted away. In Paris itself wolves roamed at night, preying on the carcasses which murder or famine left to lie unheeded in the streets.

At the end of the year 1423, the earl of Salisbury gained a considerable advantage near the town of Crevant, in Burgundy, routing a strong force of Scots, and taking prisoner Stuart, the constable of Scotland; and the next year Bedford himself defeated lord Buchan in a more important battle at Verneuil. He had barely 10,000 men, and the French and Scots numbered 18,000, but the victory was complete; nearly 5000 of the enemy, including Buchan himself, were slain; many powerful nobles were taken prisoners, and the cause of Charles appeared desperate. At this crisis the headstrong folly of the duke of Gloucester gave the first check to his brother's hitherto successful administration. Jaqueline, the countess of Hainault and Holland, had married the duke de Brabant, a cousin of the duke of Burgundy; but, as he was only a sickly boy, she got weary of him, quitted him and fled to England, where, without waiting for a divorce from Rome, she married the duke of Gloucester. The duke of Burgundy was greatly offended at the injury thus done to his cousin, whom he encouraged to resist the divorce and to retain possession of his wife's dominions, which he furnished him with troops to defend; while the duke of Gloucester, on his side, sent over bodies of English soldiers into Holland, employing in his own service those battalions which were required as reinforcements for the army of the king. Bedford was very indignant, and employed his uncle, the bishop of Winchester, who was soon afterwards known as the cardinal Beaufort, to remonstrate with his brother, but the only result was that enmity was created between Gloucester and the bishop. Gloucester

A.D. 1428.

challenged the duke of Burgundy to single combat, which was prevented by Bedford. Jaqueline herself was taken prisoner, but escaped; and, as a bull had arrived from the pope annulling her second marriage, she discarded all thoughts of Gloucester for the future, and came to an arrangement with the duke of Burgundy, surrendering to him at once some of her territories for an adequate pension, and declaring him heir for the rest; while Gloucester, on his part, married his mistress, Eleanor Cobham, and abandoned all claim upon Holland.

But the seeds of ill will between the duke of Burgundy and England had now been sown. Even in September, 1424, a truce had been made between France and Burgundy, which might perhaps have at once ripened into a permanent peace, if the king had not been too much surrounded by men whom the duke hated as the murderers of his father. At the same time the duke of Brittany was gained over by Charles, who made his brother, de Richemont, constable of France, in the room of lord Buchan, who had been killed at Verneuil, but Bedford invaded his duchy before he was able to put it in a posture of defence. and compelled him to return to the English alliance.

Thus matters went on, the English party making slow but steady progress and meeting with no material check, except before Montargis (where a natural son of the late duke of Orleans, celebrated afterwards as the count de Dunois,* with inferior forces defeated the earl of Warwick, and compelled him to raise the siege of the town), till nearly the whole of France, north of the Loire, acknowledged Henry; and Bedford felt himself strong enough to send the earl of Salisbury, the most skilful of the English commanders, to besiege Orleans, the only town of any importance remaining to Charles in that part of the kingdom. Orleans was a large and populous town, well provisioned, and defended by a strong garrison, when, in October, 1428, Salisbury appeared before its walls with an army of 10,000 men. Shortly afterwards he was killed by a chance shot, and was succeeded in his command by the earl of Suffolk, who threw up strong redoubts at different points round the town, purposing to complete his intrenchments on the return of spring. He succeeded to a great extent in cutting off all supplies from the town, without the enemy being able to distress him in the same way. One convoy under command of sir John Falstaff, Dunois did attempt to intercept, but, though he had a much larger force, and also several guns, he was beaten off with considerable loss, while the chief injury that he inflicted on

* He was not created count de Dunois till 1439, but to avoid confusion I have given him the title by which he was afterwards known. He is the hero of the little ode, now become the French national hymn, of "Partant pour la Syrie;" and the father of the Dunois mentioned in "Quentin Durward."

the English was borne by the barrels of herrings, which were shattered by his cannon-balls, and from which, as the field of battle was strewn with their contents, the conflict received the name of the Battle of Herrings.

It seemed as if nothing could save Orleans, and it was felt on both sides that its fall would be decisive of the contest between the rival kings, when a deliverer arose to France from an unexpected quarter. In a small village called Domremy, near the borders of Lorraine and Champagne, there was a young girl of about twenty years of age, named Joan d'Arc, the daughter of a common peasant; the villagers generally espoused the cause of Charles, and from her childhood she had been accustomed to hear his pretensions discussed, his rights upheld, and his enemies denounced, till she, being of an enthusiastic disposition, had learned to feel a personal interest in his success. She had at all times deep feelings of religion, and her devotion had long had a tinge of fanaticism in it. From childhood she would spend the time, that her companions devoted to amusement, in plaiting garlands for St. Catharine and St. Margaret, of whose protection she fancied herself to be the especial object; and at last she learned to believe herself favoured with visits and warnings from these celestial personages. As her native village lay near the Burgundian frontier, it was particularly exposed to the miseries of the war; and presently her constant reflection on it, and her anxiety for its termination by Charles's recovery of his rights, began to combine themselves with her religious aspirations, till she believed those rights to be the subject of the heavenly visions which now seemed to increase in frequency and importance. At last she fancied herself commissioned by Heaven to effect the deliverance of France; and, the moment that she had adopted this idea, she began to seek means to put it in execution. Two gentlemen of the district were so struck with her earnestness, that they furnished her with the means of travelling to Chinon, in Touraine, where Charles at that time held his court. She cut her hair, assumed man's clothes, and on horseback traversed the country till she arrived there. It is said, that though she had never seen the king, she at once distinguished him from the surrounding courtiers; she fell at his feet and announced to him that St. Louis and Charlemagne were constant in their prayers for him, that God had taken pity on him and on his people, and that she was sent to raise the siege of Orleans, and to conduct him to Rheims to be crowned, provided he would give her troops.

The general distress of the nation had increased the ignorant superstition of the age, and the inclination to look to supernatural sources for the relief which human aid seemed unable to supply; so that the very extravagance of Joan's pretensions procured them

A.D. 1429.

some degree of belief. The impression that she made by her first interview with Charles, was strengthened a few days afterwards by a story that she had required for her own use a sword buried behind the altar of St. Catharine, at Fierbois, marked with five crosses on the blade; and that such a sword as she described had been found. The multitude thought her a prophetess; the clergy set their face against her and pronounced her a witch, but no one in that age doubted that witches had great power; and, as it was evident that the boldness of her promises had raised the spirits of the people, the statesmen who surrounded Charles determined, whether she were prophetess or witch—

“Were she a power from heaven or blast from hell,”

to employ her agency in the attempt to relieve Orleans, which now seemed on the point of falling.

The king furnished her with a suit of armour, and with St. Catharine's sword by her side, and bearing in her right hand a white standard sprinkled with fleur-de-lis, in the centre of which was represented the Saviour of the world on his judgment-seat, surrounded by his angels, she proceeded to join the small army at Blois, which was preparing to endeavour to throw supplies into the besieged town. Joan could neither write nor read, but she caused letters to be written in her name to Henry, and also to the English generals, summoning them to retire from Orleans, and to restore to their lawful king all the towns which they had taken in France. Her summons was disregarded, but the tone of authority which she assumed, and the rumours of the proofs which she had given of the divine nature of her mission, were not without effect on the minds of the English soldiers. On the 28th of April she quitted Blois to escort a large supply of provisions to Orleans; the next day she arrived in front of a small outwork belonging to the English. She ordered all her soldiers to confess and receive the sacrament, expelled the disreputable camp-followers who hang upon every army, and then, surrounded by a small band of priests, she placed herself at the head of her troops, and led them on to the attack of the English fortification. The soldiers who guarded it were seized with a panic, they abandoned it without striking a blow; and she conducted her party in triumph into the town.

The Maid of Orleans, to give her the title earned by this exploit, sent at once for a fresh supply, and ordered that it should approach the town by the other bank of the Loire, on which the main body of the enemy's army was stationed. She herself, with Dunois, led forth a squadron to protect its entrance, but there was no occasion for her exertions; the English were so dismayed that they made no

attempt to stop it, but remained inactive in their redoubts, and this second supply was brought with equal safety into Orleans.

This success had been achieved by the mere terror of her name ; but the garrison was so much encouraged by it, that they no longer hesitated to assume the offensive and to attack the English redoubts. She herself, with her standard in her hand, led the assault by the side of Dunois ; and the next three days were days of continual battle, though the besiegers were too much dismayed to exhibit their wonted valour. The Maid herself was twice wounded, but she stanchd the blood and returned to the field. A chance shot broke down a drawbridge on which Glansdale, one of the most resolute of the English captains, was standing with a large body of soldiers, the greater part of whom were drowned, and the rest taken prisoners ; and on the 8th of May, only ten days after Joan had first appeared in front of Orleans, Suffolk, with the unanimous consent of the other leaders, raised the siege. He threw himself, with a portion of his army, into Jergeau ; the Maid pursued him, attacked the place, and, though she was again wounded, pressed the siege with such vigour, that in ten days it surrendered, and Suffolk himself became her prisoner. Several other towns fell ; some were abandoned by their garrisons even before they were attacked, and so completely was the spirit of the English broken, that when the French overtook and attacked a powerful division near the village of Patay, Falstaff, the same general who at the battle of Herrings had beaten Dunois with an inferior force, now, with a great part of the division, fled at the first assault ; and those who stood their ground were slain, with the exception of some of their commanders, among whom were Lord Talbot and Lord Scales, who became prisoners.

The council of Charles was not yet thoroughly united. The Maid pressed him earnestly to pursue his advantages, and to advance to Rheims. She declared that she had been assured by her voices (so she called the warnings which she believed that the saints gave her), that Troyes would open its gates to him at his appearance. The king and his most trusted generals hesitated ; but the common soldiers were firm in their belief in her promises, and loudly demanded to be led forward. It was decided to take advantage of their enthusiasm. The army advanced ; the citizens of Troyes rose on the English garrison, who were content to be allowed to retire with their arms and baggage, and Troyes, the very town in which the treaty had been signed which excluded Charles from the throne, now received him as its king. After one more week of triumph he arrived at Rheims, and, on the 17th of July, was crowned in the ancient cathedral with the holy oil, which, according to the story consecrated by the belief of 800 years, a

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pigeon had brought from heaven to Clovis on the first establishment of the monarchy. The Maid stood by him in complete armour with her standard in her hand. It was just, she said, that the banner which had borne the brunt should now share the triumph. At the conclusion of the ceremony she threw herself at his feet, embraced his knees, and, saluting him as king (before his coronation she had given him no higher title than that of dauphin), she said that she had now accomplished her mission, and requested leave to return to her parents, and tend their sheep as she had done before. The generals, however, who recognized the value of her influence upon the soldiers were unwilling to part with her; and she consented to remain, still eager to do what she could for her country, but no longer supported by a belief in her divine mission, or in the direct inspiration of her holy protectresses.

Bedford's situation, as regent of France for his nephew, was becoming very critical. The events of the last two months were evidently producing an effect on the mind of the duke of Burgundy, and leading him to think more seriously of reconciling himself to Charles; while in England the parliament, weary of the war which was now ceasing to be productive of glory, could hardly be induced to grant him any supplies. Soldiers were unwilling to join a standard the defeat of which seemed to be ensured by the supernatural agency of witchcraft and magic; and the only available body of men in the country had been engaged by his uncle, now the cardinal Beaufort, to join the crusade against the followers of Huss in Bohemia. Bedford's vigour and address rose with the occasion. He drew 5000 men from the garrisons of the Norman towns, persuaded his uncle to lend him his troops in despite of the indignant prohibition of the pope, and invited Philip of Burgundy to Paris, where he succeeded for the time in fixing his wavering fidelity; and thus, with a bold front, though with diminished means, he prepared for the ensuing campaign. But though the Maid's own belief in her divine mission was extinguished, that of the soldiers and of the nation in general was not. Town after town came over to Charles. To check the spreading disaffection, Bedford, with 10,000 men, quitted Paris, and advanced to Monttereau; but when he had arrived in front of Charles's army he found his men too faint-hearted to make it prudent to come to a battle, and retraced his steps. The French hung upon his retreat, and advanced to the very gates of the capital. The Maid, ever in the front of the army, urged the soldiers to fill the fosse with fagots, and to scale the walls; but it was too deep and too wide. She was again severely wounded. Charles himself showed no vigour of enterprise, and hardly common courage; and, yielding to the advice of his worthless favourites, retired again upon the Loire with the

larger half of his army. His unkingly pusillanimity disgusted his nobles; and their indignation was skilfully taken advantage of by Bedford, who, to fix the duke of Burgundy more permanently in Henry's interest, resigned to him the regency of France, and contented himself with the government of Normandy. The undaunted Maid still kept alive the courage of the French soldiers. But the most distinguished commanders were with the king at Chinon; and she found herself now associated with captains of a more ferocious and lower class, eager only for plunder, and little inclined to submit to the regulations which she persisted in enforcing. Ill omens seemed to warn her of impending disasters. St. Catharine's sword shivered in her hand; her armour, which, in the triumphant march upon Paris, she had laid upon the tomb of St. Denis, fell into the hands of the English; and her mind, in which religion had at all times bordered on fanaticism, was peculiarly alive to such tokens of the future. But they did not shake her purpose of continuing to do her duty while she could. She threw herself into Compiègne, which was invested by the duke of Burgundy; and, heading a sally of the garrison, found herself deserted by her comrades. Slowly she retreated, fighting gallantly, to the gates of the town. They had been closed by the flyers: before they could be opened to admit her she was a prisoner; and the general belief was that she had been designedly sacrificed by the jealousy of the governor.

Hitherto the arms which Bedford had employed were honourable to himself, and to the cause which he supported. The tragedy which followed Joan's capture was disgraceful to every one concerned in it; disgraceful to him and to his country, more disgraceful still to the university and clergy of France, most disgraceful of all to the base and ungrateful Charles. That Bedford himself really believed the past successes of the Maid to be owing to witchcraft is no doubt true, and may be some palliation of, but no excuse for, his cruelty, or for his violation of all the rights of civilized war. But the Church of France had agreed in pronouncing her a deliverer sent from God; and the king had solemnly recognized her claims as such, and had been delivered from certain ruin by her heroic enthusiasm.

She was a prisoner of war in the hands of the Burgundian captains; but Bedford obtained possession of her by paying her captors an enormous ransom, and then instigated the Sorbonne (the theological school of the university of Paris) to demand that she should be surrendered to the inquisition to be tried on a charge of witchcraft. She was conducted to Rouen, and, at the beginning of the year 1431, subjected to a long examination before that detestable tribunal. But one Englishman, the cardinal Beaufort, sat

A.D. 1431.

among her judges : but the court was thronged with Bedford's soldiers, who clamoured for her blood. The bishop of Beauvais presided ; but, though eager to gratify their savage revenge, no evidence of sorcery or heresy could be extracted from the modest, sensible, pious replies of the prisoner. She avowed her belief in the supernatural promptings which had been the cause of, and her support in, her past career ; and her French judges were not ashamed to decide that it could not have been God who desired the triumph of Charles VII., and to infer that she must therefore have been the agent of the devil. They pronounced that her constant receiving of the sacrament, and her assumption of masculine attire, were violations of the divine law ; and that, therefore, her assertion, that she adopted these practices in obedience to the command of the saints, must be an imposture ; and having, by threats of torture and death, compelled her to acknowledge that it was such, they condemned her, on her confession, to perpetual imprisonment.

But the malice of her enemies was not yet satisfied ; and, seeing that Charles was wholly indifferent to her fate, neither moving a man to rescue her from their hands, nor even addressing a remonstrance to those who were violating all the laws of war, inhuman as they were in those days, in this treatment of a prisoner, they determined to complete her destruction without delay. It was not usual for the inquisition to put to death any offenders but those who relapsed into their former heresies ; and it was not easy for Joan, immured for ever in a dungeon, to be guilty of such an offence ; but they found that she repented of having discarded her male habiliments, and they replaced them in her dungeon in the hope that she would resume them. She fell into the snare, and was instantly brought before the reassembled court as a relapsed heretic, and condemned to the flames. On the 30th of May she was brought into the market-place at Rouen and burnt, in the midst of her mortal agony invoking the aid of the saints and of her Saviour. One Englishman, more merciful than his fellows, at her urgent entreaty, cut a piece of wood into the shape of a cross for her, which she clasped to her bosom, and she died holding it firmly in her hands, while the name of Jesus was the last sound that her voice was heard to utter.

I have been thus particular in recounting the fate of the Maid of Orleans, partly because history records no more romantic or marvellous career, and partly because (though her faith, no doubt, was tinged with fanaticism, and her reason in some degree disordered by superstitious enthusiasm) no purer or nobler heroine adorns the annals of any country ; but I shall pass rapidly over the remaining incidents of the war. Many places were from time

to time reduced by the French commanders; many voluntarily returned to their allegiance. To animate the partisans who still remained to him, Bedford brought the youthful Henry to Paris and caused him to be crowned in the cathedral of Notre Dame; but the ceremony, performed by an English prelate, failed of its effect: the tide of reaction had set in too strongly to be arrested; and an act of his own completed the ruin of the cause he had so long upheld. In 1432 Bedford's duchess, the sister of the duke of Burgundy, died; and, as he shortly after married another wife, Philip took occasion to represent his conduct as a slight to his sister's memory, and talked so loudly of the affront thus offered to him, that it was apparent that he meant to make it a pretext for deserting the English interests.

CHAPTER XXII.

HENRY VI. (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1435
1461



IN England the continued quarrels between the duke of Gloucester and the cardinal Beaufort produced an injurious effect by preventing Bedford from receiving any cordial support, or any important supplies or reinforcements; he himself felt his health failing, and was rapidly losing his former energy. Peace began to be talked of, the pope offered his mediation, and in 1435 a congress assembled at Arras, whose deliberations, it was hoped, would restore that blessing to Europe; it was attended by ambassadors from almost every country. The French offered to leave Henry in possession of Aquitaine and Normandy; but the cardinal, the chief of the English ambassadors, rejected the proffered terms with disdain, and quitted Arras. Before he did so, the duke of Bedford died, and Philip of Burgundy, considering himself released by his death from all his engagements to the English, immediately reconciled himself to Charles, and signed a treaty acknowledging him as king of France, and promising to support his rights with all his power.

The duke of York succeeded the duke of Bedford in his government of France; but before he arrived to take the command, Paris was lost. As they had only favoured the English as the friends of the Burgundian party, the news of the peace, made at Arras between Charles and Philip, had encouraged the inhabitants

A.D. 1444.

of all the towns in the Isle of France to return to their allegiance to Charles. The feeling spread to Normandy, the province of all others most completely in the power of the English, and at last, encouraged by the vigour with which the duke of Burgundy was preparing to fulfil the treaty into which he had lately entered, and to take part in the war, the citizens of Paris rose against lord Willoughby, who commanded the English garrison, drove him into the Bastille, and soon compelled him to capitulate on condition of being allowed to retire in safety and honour to Normandy.

With the loss of Paris the English lost all chance of recovering their footing in France, and even of long retaining the territories which they still possessed. The duke of York, and lord Talbot, who had recovered his freedom, displayed great skill and valour, and gained some apparently important advantages; but, in reality, their cause was steadily going backward: fresh negotiations were opened; but the French now offered terms so much less favourable than at Arras, that they were again rejected. In 1444 a truce between the two nations for twenty-two months was agreed to; but it led to no permanent peace. In two or three years the war broke out again, and was one of almost unvaried disaster for the English. Dunois, commanding in the campaigns which have rendered his name illustrious, speedily reduced the whole of Normandy: in 1451 he had equal success in Guienne; and Calais and the insignificant towns of Guines and Ham, which depended upon it, were the only places which still displayed the English standard, which at the beginning of this reign seemed destined to float triumphantly over the whole country.

While the affairs of England were thus going to ruin on the Continent, they were not prospering much better at home. The quarrels between the duke of Gloucester and his uncle continued to distract the council and the parliaments. When the latter was made a cardinal Gloucester's party endeavoured to deprive him of the bishopric of Winchester, on the alleged ground that the two offices were incompatible; and, when he obtained the additional appointment of legate, they succeeded in persuading Henry positively to forbid his acceptance of that dignity. On the other hand, when Gloucester, as protector of the kingdom during Bedford's absence in France, endeavoured to usurp powers that did not belong to his office, the opposite faction compelled him to withdraw from such pretensions, and to know his place as the equal, not as the superior of the rest of the peers. Once the council persuaded the two princes to refer their quarrel to the arbitration of the primate, and to agree to a public reconciliation; but that, as was to be expected, produced but a hollow and brief peace between them; and their speedily reviving enmity, as active as ever, though

for a time more covertly indulged, gradually led to the dethronement of the king and total destruction of their whole family.

When Henry arrived at manhood, it was natural that his marriage should be considered an event of great importance, and as such it was converted into a trial of strength between the two parties. Gloucester wished to select for him the daughter of the count d'Armagnac, a princess nearly related to the duke of Orleans, who had lately been ransomed, after having been kept in captivity ever since the battle of Agincourt, and possessed of large estates in the south-west of France. But the cardinal, and the earl of Suffolk, the most powerful of the nobles who espoused his party, preferred Margaret, daughter of René, duke of Anjou and Maine, and titular king of Sicily and Jerusalem, though, in point of fact, he was not in possession of the very smallest part of any of these dominions; and Anjou and Maine were in the hands of the English. She was a princess of great beauty, and great abilities; and, as she was a near relation to the king of France, it was hoped that a marriage with her might lead to a permanent peace between the two countries. Suffolk was sent to the Continent as plenipotentiary to negotiate it; and he consented further that Henry should restore to René his duchies of Maine and Anjou. He married the princess himself as Henry's proxy at Nancy, and then conducted her to England, where she arrived in May, 1445.

Margaret speedily obtained entire influence over the feeble mind of her husband; and, strengthened by her support, the cardinal proceeded to take steps for the total ruin of his rival. A year or two before a great blow had been struck at Gloucester's popularity by the prosecution of his duchess for witchcraft. He had been at all times a zealous encourager of learning, and a munificent patron of learned men; and among the objects of his favour was a priest named Bolingbroke, of the highest reputation as a master of every branch of science then cultivated. He was a great astronomer; and, at the instance of the duchess, he added to his studies those of astrology and necromancy. As, while Henry was childless, her husband was his nearest heir, she persuaded Bolingbroke, and a woman named Margery Jourdain, of great celebrity as a professor of magic, to calculate the period of the king's death; and it was not difficult for the malice of the duke's enemies to found on this proved fact a charge of using unlawful means to effect it. The duchess and her agents were accused of having formed a waxen image of Henry, and then exposed it to a slow fire, in the belief that, as the wax melted away, his health would decline. They were convicted; indeed, the duchess herself confessed the practice of magical arts, though she denied the object imputed to her. Jourdain was burnt as a witch, Bolingbroke was executed

A.D. 1447.

as a traitor, and the duchess was condemned to do public penance in the streets of London, and to be imprisoned for life.

Emboldened by this success, his enemies now proceeded to attack the Duke himself. His popularity among the citizens of London was such as to render it politic to choose some other scene of action; so a Parliament was summoned to meet at Bury, in February, 1447, where he was accused of treason, and arrested, and a few days afterwards he was found dead in his bed. The manner of his death was not known, but he was universally understood to have been murdered by the contrivance of Suffolk and the cardinal. The cardinal himself died only six weeks later; and Suffolk, now a duke, for a time enjoyed almost undivided power; but his rapid elevation had provoked envy, which he further exasperated by endeavouring to crush those who had no fault but that of having been the adherents or favourites of Gloucester. The cession of Anjou and Maine, which was ostensibly his act, though it had been sanctioned by the whole council, and was not really injurious to the kingdom, was very unpopular. Henry's imbecile character could not command respect, and the queen's inclination to arbitrary measures was becoming notorious and odious. While matters were in this state the enemies of the minister found a new head in Richard, duke of York. He was descended from Lionel, duke of Clarence, the second son of Edward the Third; and, being such, he clearly, according to the strict rules of succession, had a better right to the throne than the king, who was descended from the duke of Lancaster, the third son of that monarch; but the claims of his branch of the family had been unanimously passed over on the deposition of Richard, and the authority of the house of Lancaster had been confirmed by many acts of parliament, by oaths of allegiance from the whole kingdom, and from the princes themselves, whose rights had been disregarded. York had commanded in France after the death of the duke of Bedford, displaying considerable skill as a governor, though unable to arrest the tide of French conquest. He had afterwards been more successful in repressing a rebellion in Ireland; and in both employments he had won very general esteem and good will by his moderation and affability. It contributed also greatly to his influence that his wife was the daughter of Neville, earl of Westmoreland, whose nephew had married the heiress of the earl of Warwick, and had succeeded to the title and vast estates of that nobleman. He now openly attacked the bishop of Chichester, who held the privy seal; and, when that prelate had been driven from office, some members of the commons, looking upon this as the first step towards victory, formally impeached Suffolk himself. Some of the charges brought against him were ridiculous, some notoriously false; but as it

seemed likely that, if he were brought to trial, he would be unable to escape condemnation, his friends, in order to save him, persuaded him to submit to the king's mercy, who banished him for five years, hoping that the ill will of his enemies would be cooled by his absence; but they were too determined on his destruction to allow themselves to be thus balked of their prey. The vessel in which he crossed the Channel was waylaid; he was seized, dragged into a small boat, and beheaded. His murderers conveyed his body to the Kentish coast, left it on the shore, and sailed away undiscovered.

These events unsettled the minds of the people, and disposed them to sedition and violence, and their restless humour was taken advantage of by an Irishman, of the name of Jack Cade, who pretended to be a son of sir John Mortimer, another descendant of duke Lionel, and collected a vast body of men in Kent, who committed great outrages. He defeated the first force that was sent against him, entered London, seized lord Say, the treasurer, and put him to death, till at last the citizens, alarmed for their property and their lives, united with the king's troops, and drove him out of the capital. A reward was offered for his arrest. He was slain by the sheriff of Kent, and his head was set upon London bridge.

While these events were taking place the duke of York was in Ireland; but he returned in the autumn, and at the beginning of the year, 1452, he raised a strong force, with which he marched towards London with the avowed intention of compelling a reformation in the government. The duke of Somerset had been the principal minister since the death of Suffolk, and the duke of York impeached him in parliament, but did not behave with the wary caution that such a step required. Confiding in his power, he came unarmed into the king's presence, and was himself made a prisoner; but, so great was his popularity, that Somerset did not venture on an act of violence towards him, but was contented to require him to take a fresh oath of allegiance to Henry, and released him. He returned to his castle at Wigmore, and remained quiet for some time.

At the end of the next year, however, Henry was seized with an illness which temporarily reduced him to a complete state of fatuity; while, about the same time, Queen Margaret was delivered of a son, who was christened Edward. Both events were of great political importance. The first rendered it necessary to appoint a protector of the kingdom, and the duke of York was unanimously named to that office; while the second put an end to his hopes of succeeding peaceably to the throne on Henry's death, by providing the king with a male heir. He threw Somerset into prison, but forbore to proceed any further against him, and continued to exercise his

A.D. 1455.

authority with great moderation, till the beginning of 1455, when Henry suddenly recovered, declared the protectorate terminated, released Somerset, and restored him to his office. York had some reason to think that Somerset and the queen were bent on his destruction; and he again collected an army, with which he marched a second time towards the capital. The king's government, afraid of his reaching London, where his popularity was great, advanced with a small force to meet him, and occupied St. Alban's, denouncing the Yorkists as traitors. York, thinking that there was no longer safety for him in moderation, attacked the town, and a fierce skirmish ensued. On the 22nd of May, 1455, was shed the first blood in this unhappy quarrel, which for years devastated England, and which was carried on with a degree of fierceness and cruelty on both sides, of which no other wars in this country afford any example, till it had destroyed nearly all the princes of the blood, and almost annihilated the ancient nobility of the kingdom; for it is remarkable, that, while in other wars the slaughter fell principally on the common soldiers, the higher classes who could afford to pay a ransom being spared, in this war the mutual animosity of the nobles against each other proved especially fatal to their own order; and commands were issued on each side, to give no quarter to the nobility and gentry, but to spare the common people. In this first battle the number of the slain was small, but some of the principal nobles of the king's party, including Somerset himself, were slain. Henry fell into the hands of the duke of York, who treated him with outward respect, but compelled him to consent to his appointment as constable of England, while the earl of Warwick was made governor of Calais. He repeated his oath of allegiance, and when, at the end of the year, the king's malady returned, he was a second time appointed protector.

Margaret bore this state of things with great impatience. She was determined to rule both king and kingdom, and the authority entrusted to York reduced her to a cipher. A second time Henry was said to have recovered sufficiently to resume his authority, and she carried him on a journey to Coventry, where York, Warwick, and the earl of Salisbury, Warwick's father, were invited to meet him. There seems no doubt that she intended, when she had got them into her power, to have put them to death; but they received timely notice of her intention, and escaped; and, for the future, surrounded themselves with an armed force sufficient to prevent any similar treachery. Through the mediation of the primate, a reconciliation took place, which was ostensibly confirmed by a solemn procession to St. Paul's, in which the king, the queen, the duke, and the leading nobles of each party walked side by side, to implore the divine blessing on their renewed friendship.

A.D. 1469.

But the seeds of enmity had been too deeply sown to be extirpated by such a hollow pageant. A quarrel between the servants of the king and the earl of Warwick rekindled its smouldering sparks. The queen endeavoured to seize Warwick, who fled to his government in Calais, but soon returned to bear his part in the war, which was henceforward to assume a more regular character.

In May, 1459, Henry raised the royal standard at Leicester, while York and his party prepared to advance to Kenilworth. From some cause, not known, each party assumed the same cognizance, a rose; the badge varied only in colour, that of king Henry, or the Lancastrians, being a red, while the Yorkists were distinguished by a white rose. It would be tedious and unprofitable to relate the details of the miserable conflicts that ensued, in which victory declared alternately for either side, and the ranks of each army were disgraced by treachery and desertion. At one time the royalists gained such decisive advantages that York fled to Ireland and Warwick to Calais, and a parliament at Coventry cheerfully passed a bill of attainder against them both as traitors. At another, Henry himself was a prisoner in the hands of his subjects.

Before the victory of Northampton, where the king was taken, the duke of York had not himself claimed the throne, though his partisans had constantly asserted his right to do so. But the violent proceedings of the parliament at Coventry left him scarcely any prospect of safety as a subject, and compelled him either to flee for his life, or to endeavour to obtain the supreme power. He now asserted his pretensions more openly, though he still made no attempt to establish them by force; but contented himself with stating his claim to the assembled parliament. The two houses decided on a compromise, according to which, Henry should retain the crown for his lifetime, but Richard should be acknowledged as his heir, to the exclusion of the prince of Wales.

Margaret, however, was not inclined to submit to the exclusion of her son from his inheritance; the moment that her husband fell into the power of the opposite party she fled to the north, where she was joined by the nobles who adhered to Henry, and who speedily collected an army of nearly 20,000 men. York had not above 6000 with him, for the greater part of his force was at Shrewsbury with his eldest son Edward; but he thought his honour concerned not to avoid a battle, and sent a formal challenge to Somerset and Clifford, the commanders of the queen's army. The battle took place in front of the town of Wakefield, on the 30th of December, 1460. The Yorkists were utterly defeated, and York himself, with his second son, the earl of Rutland, and Salisbury, and many other nobles of the party were taken prisoners.

A.D. 1461.

A crown of grass was placed in derision on the duke's brows, and he was instantly beheaded; and Clifford himself carried the bleeding trophy to Margaret, who disgraced her sex by the unwomanly exultation with which she received it. As a rebel against the sovereign to whom he had repeatedly sworn allegiance, it cannot be denied that duke Richard deserved his fate; but, in other respects, he was a prince of singular virtue. His abilities were inferior to those of his son, but the moderation with which he pursued what he considered his just rights, the fairness of his conduct towards his opponents, and his humanity in victory, place him in marked and amiable contrast to his savage contemporaries.

The young Rutland was stabbed by Clifford with his own hand, Salisbury and the captive nobles were beheaded, and the Yorkist party seemed broken; but, in fact, the victory of Wakefield was Henry's greatest misfortune; since the atrocities which the queen and her adherents perpetrated in their exultation, alienated his warmest supporters. His army, as it marched from York to St. Alban's, pillaged the country all along its line of march, burnt the manor-houses, plundered the churches and abbeys, maltreating and slaying all who resisted, till the zeal for the royal cause which had previously animated the generality of the clergy and gentry gave way to a desire for their own preservation, and disposed them to welcome any change which might have a chance to save them from a repetition of such atrocities. The new duke of York, afterwards Edward IV., was possessed of considerable military skill and promptitude in action, but was as destitute of moderation and humanity as his father had been conspicuous for those qualities. He defeated a strong body of royalists under Henry's half-brother, the earl of Pemboke, and gave a terrible indication of his disposition by putting to death, in cold blood, his prisoners of noble birth; and (though his victory was more than counterbalanced by a severe defeat sustained by Warwick at St. Alban's, where Henry was retaken by his own adherents, and Margaret again disgraced herself by retaliating the cruelty of her enemies) he marched at once on London, where the chief strength of his party had always lain, and openly assumed the title of king. He would not wait to summon a parliament, but a mob was collected on the outskirts, to whom lord Falconbridge addressed a long speech, setting forth the evils which had arisen from the weakness of the king and the cruelty of the queen, and urging Edward's superior claims to the throne. The populace eagerly interrupted him by greeting Edward as king, and a few lords and members of the commons house assembled at Baynard's Castle, and ratified his acceptance of the title. On the 4th of March, 1461, he proceeded in royal state to St. Paul's, and

from thence to Westminster, where he entered the house of lords, and took his seat on the throne. Crossing over to the abbey, he put the crown on his own head, and, standing before the great altar, received the homage of the nobles of his party by whom he was attended. The next day he was proclaimed king through the city, and the reign of Henry was terminated.

A reign so disturbed first by foreign and latterly by civil wars, was not likely to be productive of any systematic reforms; but the weakness of the monarchy co-operated with the silent effect of time in gradually increasing the power of parliament; and it is a mark of the rising importance of the commons, that one of the charges against Suffolk was, that he had tampered with the election of members of their house; and that the only law of great importance passed during the period was one limiting the electors of the county members to such as possessed forty shillings a year in land. Such sum was equal in value to above ten times that amount of our present money, but the rate fixed has remained unaltered even by the reform bill, and to this day the forty-shilling freeholders form a very numerous and important portion of the constituency of the kingdom.

CHAPTER XXIII.

EDWARD IV.

A.D.
1461
1483.



EDWARD IV. was but nineteen years of age when he thus made himself master of the kingdom. We shall hurry rapidly over his melancholy and un instructive reign, when the kingdom was desolated by civil war, (every where and always fertile of misery to a nation,) the alternations of which, strange as they were, were produced by causes which no one has been able to trace, and which, could they be discovered, would probably be found in some of the vilest passions which influence the human heart. Less than 200 years afterwards England became a second time the scene of civil war; but then, though there was much to deplore, and much to be ashamed of, there was also much to which the partisans of either side could point with satisfaction, and even with pride; much to which their posterity, whatever may be the political feelings of each individual, may refer with temperate and well-founded thankfulness. Grievous as it was, and stained with one great and inexpiable crime, still that

A.D. 1461.

war was carried on for the most part on both sides with an English spirit. On the one side, the virtuous and high minded, though ill-educated and misguided king, his faithful and chivalrous nobles who fought and fell for him, his holy clergy who prayed and suffered for him, form a band of heroes, whom the advocates of his cause may well remember with respect; on the other, the dauntless patriots who asserted their country's liberties, and the indomitable middle class who maintained them with their swords, have established for themselves a permanent claim on the gratitude of all who deserve to be the inheritors of their freedom: and, when the strife was over, the chief, whom it had raised to power, whatever judgment may be passed on his mysterious and inconsistent character, was at least no governor of their submission to whom Englishmen had cause to feel ashamed; but one who, rising with his prosperity, swayed the sceptre, in many instances, with a sagacity and energy that, if he had owed his elevation to any source but his own crimes, would have entitled him to a high place among the rulers of mankind.

This war has no such honourable features. On one side we see an imbecile king, and a queen who more than effaces our admiration of the intrepid resolution with which she braved disaster and treachery in her struggle for her husband's rights, by the implacable revenge, the unwomanly ferocity, with which she sought to destroy all who opposed her, and even feasted her eyes on the remains of her fallen enemies; on the other, a licentious, faithless prince, brave, indeed, and skilful in war, but hardened in cruelty even before he arrived at the age of manhood, seeking his way to the throne by the indiscriminate slaughter of his countrymen; and, when it was won, caring for it only as affording him the means for a more unchecked career of shameless profligacy, making even the valour and military glory of his countrymen a pretext for extorting from foreign princes treasures to be squandered in personal riot and debauchery.

This new reign opened with an act of the most ridiculous, yet odious, tyranny. In those days every shop was distinguished by a sign; and one unfortunate tradesman had chosen the crown for his device; in a fit of loyal pleasure he boasted that his son was heir to the crown, and the saying was repeated as a merry jest. But Edward's hold upon the throne was too uncertain for him to relish it, and he actually had the unhappy shopkeeper executed as a traitor for holding up the kingly title to derision.

In truth, he could not but feel that his position as king was very precarious. He had possession of London, and throughout the south of England his title was cordially acknowledged: but in the north Henry had still a powerful party, and his generals were at

the head of an army of nearly 50,000 men. The very day after the proclamation of Edward as king his forces marched to encounter this formidable host; and, on the 29th of the month, he confronted them with still greater numbers at Towton, a village about eight miles from York. So obstinate was the contest that it was not decided till late on the second day. The slaughter on both sides was immense. The Lancastrians gave little quarter; the Yorkists none, by the express orders of Edward himself. At last victory declared for him; and he showed how little he deserved it by beheading the few prisoners of noble birth, who had been taken, in cold blood. Henry and Margaret fled to Scotland, and Edward returned to London for his coronation. In the winter he summoned a parliament, which revised all the acts of attainder that at different times had been carried against his family and party, and passed votes of forfeiture against Henry, his queen, his son, and all his adherents.

Even yet Margaret was not inclined to abandon the contest. She crossed over to France, where Louis XI., a prince of deep policy, but of no other virtue, had lately succeeded to the throne; and, by promising him to restore Calais if her husband were re-established in his rights, she prevailed on that crafty monarch to send her a considerable reinforcement. It only encouraged her to encounter another signal defeat at Hexham. Her troops were cut to pieces. Those who escaped the sword of the enemy perished by the axe of the executioner; and at last her cause seemed desperate even to herself. Henry fled, and sought safety in disguise; but after a time his retreat was discovered, and he fell into Warwick's hands, who treated him with great insult, tying his legs, and strapping him to his horse, that he might not escape; and in this condition led him in triumph through the streets of London to the Tower, where he was kept prisoner for five years. Margaret was exposed to equal indignity and greater danger. She was wandering with her child alone through the wood near the fatal field of battle, when she fell into the hands of robbers, who plundered her of all her property. While they were quarrelling over their booty she escaped from them, only to meet another ruffian of still fiercer aspect, who with his sword drawn seemed to menace her with instant destruction. Despair gave her courage, of which, indeed, she was seldom in want. She advanced towards the bandit with an intrepid countenance. "Take this boy, my friend," were her words: "save the son of thy king." The man was so struck with awe at her demeanour, or with admiration at her courage, that he became her guide, and led her in safety to the nearest port, where she found a boat, and escaped to Flanders. From thence she reached her father's court, in Lorraine, where she resided in safety

A.D. 1464.

and obscurity for some years. Those of Henry's adherents who escaped the battle-field and the scaffold also fled to the Continent, where they lived in utter destitution. The duke of Exeter was actually seen by De Comines wandering barefoot through the country, begging his bread from door to door. But at last most of them reached the court of the duke of Burgundy, where they were hospitably received, and where they remained till the renewal of the wars, when most of them returned to fall in the fatal battle of Barnet.

Edward, if he had been possessed of common prudence and energy, might now have been secure on his throne; and his first steps were well calculated to give stability to his position. He rewarded his adherents, and, at the same time, attached them to his interests for the future by attainting all the chief Lancastrian nobles, confiscating their estates, and bestowing them on his own partisans; and, by his affability and courtesy to all classes, even to those not generally honoured with a sovereign's notice, he rendered himself exceedingly popular.

But as it was not the affection of the people in general, but the power of one noble family which had been the principal means of raising him to the throne, the subsequent enmity of the same house for a while deprived him of it. Warwick, now the head of the Nevilles, was by far the most opulent and powerful noble that had ever been seen in England. One of his brothers was Lord Montague, a baron of the greatest military reputation, who had won the battle of Hexham; another brother was archbishop of York, and chancellor of the kingdom. The first offence given to this influential family was caused by an act passed immediately after Montague's victory, resuming several estates which of late years had been imprudently alienated by the crown, among which were some manors in the possession of one or other of the three brothers. But a far deeper injury was done to their pride by the attempt to raise up another family to equal or superior consideration in the kingdom.

Being at all times of a most amorous disposition, Edward had fallen violently in love with lady Elizabeth Grey, the widow of sir John Grey, a knight of the Lancastrian party, and daughter of sir Richard Woodville and his wife, the duchess of Bedford, the widow of the great duke. He married her secretly, in the spring of 1464; but at the end of the year he avowed his marriage, and caused her to be crowned, at Westminster, as his queen. Being a woman of great beauty and capacity, she speedily obtained great influence over him. She was naturally anxious for the advancement of her own relations, and having always been, both by birth and by her first marriage, closely connected with the Lancastrians, she had but little

friendship for the Nevilles, who had been the chief instruments of their overthrow. The kings of England had constantly exerted great influence and even direct authority over the marriage of the young nobles and great heiresses of the kingdom; and now, by Edward's favour, her sisters were all married to powerful lords; her brothers and her son by sir John Grey to opulent heiresses or widows; so little care being taken to avoid provoking comments or ridicule that the wife selected for her youngest brother, John, a boy of twenty, was the old duchess of Norfolk, who had passed her eightieth year. Warwick was especially offended, on several grounds. He had endeavoured to promote the marriage of the king to Isabella queen of Castile, who had received the proposal with eagerness.* He had also solicited the hand of the heiress of the duke of Exeter, now married to the queen's son, for his own nephew; a further offence was given to him by taking away the great seal from his brother: and his alienation was completed by the marriage of the king's sister, Margaret, to the duke of Burgundy, in spite of his most urgent remonstrances. He began to strengthen his party against the king. Many of the nobles were sufficiently inclined to join him, being discontented at the Woodvilles, whom they looked upon as of inferior birth, being ennobled by different titles, and invested with the highest offices of the state, and thus raised to an equality with themselves; and he obtained an important recruit from the king's own family, by giving the duke of Clarence his eldest daughter in marriage, who, as he had no son, was the heiress of half of his vast possessions. Edward was greatly displeased, and vented his displeasure in severe reproaches, which were retorted by the earl with equal bitterness.

From this time forth there was an end of all cordiality between them; the steps which Warwick took to make Edward feel his resentment are not very clear; but a most formidable insurrection, which in 1469 broke out in Yorkshire, the chief seat of the power of his family, was at least favoured, if not originally instigated by him. Its ostensible object was to resist the imposition of a new tax; but the especial hostility shown by its leaders to the family of the queen, whose father and brother they put to death, seems to show a community of interests, or at least of inclinations with the Nevilles scarcely to be accounted for, except by the fact of some previous understanding having existed between them. They defeated lord Pembroke in a pitched battle at Edgecote; and immediately afterwards Warwick and Clarence, who had just returned from Calais, proceeded towards Olney, in Northamptonshire, where Edward was at the time, and, though they treated him with out-

* See in Gardner's memorials of Henry VII. a letter from Isabella alleging Edward's rejection of her hand as a reason for her former dislike to England: and for Warwick's quarrel with Edward.

A.D. 1470.

ward respect, in effect made him their prisoner, and compelled him to accompany them to Warwick's castle at Middleham, where they detained him for some time.

This rebellion had scarcely been put down when another broke out in Lincolnshire, which was put down by Edward himself, who by some means or other had recovered his liberty. And to restore peace to the kingdom, he reconciled himself to his brother Clarence, and to Warwick, conferring on the earl the dignity of grand justiciary of Wales, and agreeing to give his daughter, a child only four years old, to the son of lord Montague, who had been recently created earl of Northumberland. It was but a short-lived reconciliation: a second time Warwick and Clarence endeavoured to make him prisoner, and, being disappointed by his escape, in consequence of a timely warning which he received of their design, they crossed over to France, where, by the mediation of Louis, Warwick became reconciled to queen Margaret, agreed to do his utmost to restore Henry to his throne, and proposed to give his daughter Anne in marriage to the young prince Edward, if he should re-establish him on the throne of his fathers.

The king was alarmed, as he well might be, at the news of this strange reconciliation; and he sought to lessen its effect as much as possible by detaching Clarence from the earl; urging upon him, by his emissaries, the folly of conspiring to depress his own family in order to restore its mortal enemies to power; and he so worked on the fickle mind of the prince that he agreed to join him again on the first favourable opportunity after his return to England. Satisfied with this promise, Edward gave himself no further trouble about Warwick's enmity, but plunged more recklessly than ever into his favourite pleasures, exciting by his profligacy the disgust of his people, and the contempt of the nobles, who were urgent in their invitations to Warwick to deliver them from the ignominious rule of this modern Sardanapalus.

Warwick was prepared to make the most effectual reply to their call. His friends posted all over London a sort of proclamation denouncing, not the king himself, but the favourites who had obtained unworthy possession of the royal ear; and soon afterwards he embarked for England, and his partisans began to assemble in the north. Edward, roused from his inactivity by the news, hastened towards the scene of danger; but when he heard that Warwick had landed and proclaimed Henry king, and that Montague, whom he believed to be attached to himself, was preparing to join his brother, he fled, and with difficulty reached Lynn, in Norfolk, where he embarked on board a small vessel ready to sail for Flanders; so great having been his haste that neither he nor his attendants had any change of clothes or any money, and he was

compelled to leave his cloak, lined with sable, in the captain's hands to pay for his passage.

It was the middle of September when Warwick landed at Plymouth; and, within eleven days, Edward had been forced to abandon his kingdom without striking a blow. He had scarcely crossed the Channel when his queen was delivered of a son, born October the 16th, 1470, and known in history as Edward V. On almost the same day Warwick and Clarence entered the capital in triumph, released Henry from his captivity in the Tower, and conducted him to St. Paul's with the crown upon his head. A parliament was summoned which passed a bill of attainder against Edward, and, as a natural consequence of such attainder, declared the duke of Clarence the heir of the late duke of York, and of Henry in default of his lawful issue.

The news of this revolution was received by Louis of France with open exultation, by Charles of Burgundy with mingled and doubtful feelings. His court had long been the refuge of the Lancastrian nobles; some of them were high in his councils and confidence, and he himself was nearly related to Henry. On the other hand, Edward was his brother-in-law; and, what was more important in his eyes, a sworn enemy of Louis. Unable to foresee the end of these strange events, he temporized with both parties: sending De Comines to Calais to open negotiations with Warwick, and at the same time supplying Edward with money, and conniving at his hiring ships and transports in the Flemish ports.

As soon as the severity of the winter was over Edward prepared to cross the Channel to recover his kingdom, or die in the attempt. He had lost it in a fortnight; he now regained it in a month. On the 14th of March, 1471, he landed at Ravenspur, the same place where Henry IV. had disembarked when he came to dethrone Richard. He had with him lord Hastings and about 500 men; and he was soon joined by his youngest brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester, who was beginning to give promise of great abilities of every kind, with about 100 men more. So slowly did reinforcements come in that he found it expedient to proclaim that he had abandoned all claim to the throne, and only sought to recover his inheritance as duke of York; he wore in his bonnet an ostrich feather, the device of Henry's son, prince Edward, and at York abjured upon oath all pretensions to the crown. Without a moment's delay he proceeded southward towards the capital; moving so rapidly that Montague, who held Pomfret, could not collect his forces in time to attack him; and meeting with no resistance, because the best of Warwick's troops had been stationed on the southern and south-eastern coasts to intercept him, and had not heard of his landing.

A.D. 1471.

Warwick himself had probably more courage than military skill ; for, even when Edward reached Coventry, he had but 3000 men with him, and might easily have been crushed by Warwick's superior forces ; but the earl's supineness encouraged reinforcements to join Edward, who now boldly reassumed the title of king, and challenged Warwick to single combat. When that was declined, he offered him pardon for his revolt, and promised to restore him to his favour, if he would return to his duty ; but his advances were rejected, in spite of Clarence's entreaties, who, when he could make no impression on his father-in-law, quitted his standard, and joined his brother, with 4000 men. Edward, now at the head of 10,000 men, marched to London, of which Warwick's brother, the archbishop of York, had been left governor, with 6000 men ; but he was always of a timorous and vacillating disposition, and, finding that the citizens were inclined to Edward's party, he resolved to make his own peace with him, and not only submitted himself, but delivered Henry into his hands. On the 11th of April Edward entered London ; but, hearing that Warwick was at last marching to attack him, he quitted the capital on the 13th, and, moving northward, advanced as far as Barnet. On the 14th was fought the battle which, in fact, decided the war ; the king's army was considerably outnumbered by the enemy, who had also a great superiority in artillery. His brother Richard though only nineteen, commanded his right wing, lord Hastings his left, and he himself took his post in the centre. At first the battle went so much against him, Hastings being outflanked, and utterly routed, that the news reached London that he was completely defeated ; but the right and the centre were maintaining a more equal contest, and indeed had gained some advantage, when an accident gave him a complete victory. Edward's device was the sun, and that of the earl of Oxford, one of the chief Lancastrian commanders, was a star, with streaming rays. Oxford's men, returning from the pursuit of Hastings, were mistaken by their comrades for Edward's troops, and received with a volley of arrows. They, in return, attacked their assailants, taking it for granted that they were enemies. The whole army was thrown into irremediable confusion, of which Edward and Richard took prompt and skilful advantage. The Lancastrians were wholly defeated, and Warwick and Montague slain.

The same day that all hopes of her party perished with Warwick, queen Margaret landed at Weymouth, and began to raise the loyal yeomen of the west country to strike one more blow for her husband's cause. They met at Exeter, in formidable numbers ; and, marching towards London, arrived at Wells. There, hearing that Edward was barring their road at Abingdon, they turned aside, and proceeded towards Gloucester, with the intention of

crossing the Severn at that point, then forming an union with their friends in Cheshire and Lancashire, and descending on the metropolis from that side of the country. But they were refused admission into Gloucester, and, not choosing to waste time in attacking so strong a town, they pressed onwards to the bridge at Tewkesbury. By this time Edward, who had pursued them with great vigour ever since he heard of their march from Wells, had almost overtaken them; so it was decided not to attempt to cross the river, but to give him battle on its left bank. Edward perceived their intention with joy. Courage was his only virtue, military skill his only talent, and in a pitched battle he had never been defeated. Neither army was very large, but the Yorkists far outnumbered the Lancastrians. Somerset commanded for Margaret, having under his care prince Edward, a youth of seventeen. Richard led the attack that was to fix the crown on his brother's brows; and his premature skill, united with the most impetuous valour, soon decided the contest. Somerset did all that a gallant leader could do; but lord Wenlock, his second in command, was either a coward, or a traitor, and refused to support him. Somerset burning with indignation, clove his skull with his battle-axe; but this act of fury only added to the confusion. After a short struggle victory declared for the Yorkists. Prince Edward fell fighting, as became the grandson of the hero of Agincourt. Somerset, and those chiefs who escaped the slaughter of the field of battle, took refuge in the church as a sanctuary; but no sanctuary could afford protection against the unscrupulous and merciless Edward. They were dragged forth, and put to death in the market-place at Tewkesbury. Margaret had also taken refuge in a religious house; but her retreat was discovered, and she was sent to the Tower, where her husband had been confined ever since his surrender to Edward.

Edward had now no enemy left alive but Henry, if, indeed, that gentle prince could be called an enemy to any one. He arrived in London, seventeen days after his victory, on the 21st of May; and the next morning the citizens were informed that Henry was dead. The announcement declared that in his weak state of health the news of the utter ruin of his party had proved too much for him, and that he had died of a broken heart; but the report which obtained more general belief told that he had been murdered, some said by the advice, others by the dagger of the duke of Gloucester. In succeeding years it was the fashion to blacken Richard's memory by every possible imputation; but Edward was too revengeful and too pitiless to need a prompter to rid himself of one, from whose partisans he had lately experienced such determined hostility, which any favourable opportunity was likely to rekindle.

A.D. 1474.

This last victory was final. Lord Pembroke, who had an army on foot in Wales, disbanded it, and fled with his nephew, the earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII., to Brittany. The son of lord Falconbridge, who had a force formidable both by sea and land under his command, after a vain attempt to make himself master of London, surrendered, on promise of pardon and favour; but when he had dismissed his troops, and given up his vessels, the faithless king put him to death.

In thus establishing himself upon the throne, if Edward had displayed great treachery and cruelty, he had also exhibited great courage, energy, and military ability. The remaining years of his reign were neither happy nor honourable. Wholly abandoned to profligate pleasures, he entrusted most of his affairs to his brother Richard, who was daily giving proofs of great talents for government; but, at the same time, of a grasping, ambitious, and ferocious temper. George, the duke of Clarence, his elder brother, was equally covetous and ambitious, but was not endued with the same vigour or ability; and the court was distracted with their dissensions. Clarence had married Warwick's eldest daughter, Isabel; and Richard now determined to marry the younger daughter, Anne, who had been betrothed to prince Edward, who fell at Tewkesbury. Clarence, eager to engross the whole of Warwick's vast inheritance, endeavoured to prevent this match, and disguised his sister-in-law as a cookmaid to conceal her from Gloucester, and, when she was discovered, declared furiously that though his brother might have the wife, he should never have her inheritance. The quarrel between them was terminated, to outward appearance, by an act of parliament, dividing the disputed property fairly between the sisters; but the ill will thus sown between the brothers was permanent, and after a few years led to Clarence's destruction. That unfortunate prince had soon another and more plausible cause of irritation. His wife died about the same time that ^{A.D.} 1477. Charles of Burgundy fell at Nancy, leaving a daughter, Mary, the sole heiress of his important dominions. Clarence became ambitious of marrying her; and his suit was favoured by his sister Margaret, Charles's widow. But the queen's brother, earl Rivers, was also a suitor for her hand; and Edward, who was always jealous of his brother, and had never forgotten that he had once been declared Henry's heir to the exclusion of himself, opposed his pretensions, and Clarence made no secret of his discontent. The queen and her family inflamed their mutual exasperation; and at last, on the most trivial pretences, Edward himself impeached Clarence of treason before his council, obtained his condemnation, and had him put to death in the Tower, where, according to the universal belief, he was drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine.

The darling passion of Charles the Bold had been hostility to Louis; and, soon after the termination of the civil war, he had engaged Edward to enter into his views, and to reassert the claim of the Plantagenets to the crown of France. This claim was always popular in England, and the parliament immediately voted him a large supply; but as it was not sufficient for his warlike preparations, and for his pleasures, he also extorted large sums from the wealthiest of his subjects as gifts, which he called benevolences; and, having thus raised an army of nearly 17,000 men, he passed over to Calais, and entered France. Louis XI. never considered what was the most honourable, but only what was the most advantageous line of action. To his schemes of domestic policy peace was of paramount importance, and peace he was determined to preserve. He was aware of Edward's military reputation; but he could also appreciate his weak and profligate character; and he determined that it would be cheaper and easier to buy him off than to fight him. Money was with him as favourite and as efficacious an agent as ever it had been in the hands of Philip of Macedon; and he never employed it more lavishly than on this occasion. He scattered large bribes profusely among Edward's courtiers and ministers; and, when he had gained them over, he opened negotiations with the king himself. For a present payment of 75,000 crowns, and an annuity of 50,000, Edward agreed to lead back his army to England, and to give his daughter to Louis's eldest son. For 50,000 crowns more he agreed to release queen Margaret, who had been now for five years his prisoner, and who gladly renounced all her claims on England to be allowed to retire to France, where she died in 1482. When the terms of this agreement had been settled, equally discreditable to both monarchs, except in respect of Louis's exertions for Margaret's freedom, a bridge was erected across the Somme, at Pecquigny, with a strong barrier in the middle, lest either monarch should plot the assassination of the other, so complimentary, and probably so just was their mutual appreciation of the other's good faith. The two kings met on the bridge, shook hands with one another through the grating, and swore to observe their engagements.

It was not strange that the army and the nation at large were dissatisfied with such an ignominious treaty; and so general was the feeling of discontent, that Edward did not venture to demand further supplies from his parliament, but levied heavy sums from the clergy, as less able to resist him; and engaged largely in commerce on his own account; sending merchant vessels laden with the staple commodities of the kingdom, tin, wool, and cloth, to the Mediterranean, where they found a ready market, and the sums thus procured rendered him in some degree independent of his people.

A.D. 1483.

Meanwhile the king of France, though not inclined to make war himself, contrived that others should do so for his objects. The clause in the treaty of Pecquigny, according to which the Dauphin was to marry the princess Elizabeth, he probably never intended to fulfil; and, to prevent Edward from resenting his breach of faith, he resolved to find him employment nearer home; and with this view instigated James of Scotland to declare war against him. But Scotland was too much agitated by factions, which divided even the royal family, to be capable of vigorous action. The duke of Gloucester at once marched to the borders, and took Berwick; and peace was made, leaving that important fortress in the hands of the English.

Louis's machinations, however, had not been secret; and Edward meditated revenge. But his dissolute life, which had long since destroyed the personal beauty, for which, in his youth, he was celebrated throughout Europe, had now also ruined his constitution. An apparently slight illness proved fatal to him, and he died on the 9th of April, 1483, having reigned nearly twenty-one years; leaving two sons, Edward, prince of Wales, a boy of about thirteen, and Richard, duke of York, about four years younger; and a character stained by almost every vice, and redeemed by as little virtue as can well be found in one possessed of undoubted ability.

In such a reign of terror it could hardly be expected that the political or social condition of the people would receive any great improvement. And Hallam accordingly calls it the first reign since the granting of Magna Charta, during which no statute was passed for the redress of grievances, or for the maintenance of the subjects' liberty. Yet even in this miserable period, one great invention, productive above all others of subsequent advancement and happiness to the nation, was introduced into the kingdom. Within three or four years of the battle of Tewkesbury, William Caxton erected at Westminster the first printing press used in England. It would exceed our limits to enter into the origin of this, the most useful discovery of human science. It is sufficient here to remind the reader, that, fertile as it has been of blessing to Europe, its greatest and happiest fruits have been reserved for our own island. In other nations it has revived literature: in Germany as well as here it has reformed religion. In England alone, the only home of a free press, it has established perfect independence of thought, and complete political and social liberty.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EDWARD V. AND RICHARD III.

A.D.
1483.
1485.

THE events of the next two years and a half are among the most obscure transactions of English history. The real causes of them are almost always unintelligible; the ostensible pretexts often unknown, the very facts themselves sometimes uncertain. Part of this perplexity originates in the dark and crooked motives of the actors themselves; part in the deliberate falsification of history practised by the writers of the time of Henry VII., who, as their patron had no possible title to the crown by his own descent, or his own merits, sought to make out something that might resemble one by blackening the character, and exaggerating, if they did not invent, the crimes of his predecessor.

At the accession of the young Edward V., the leading nobles were divided into two parties: one consisting of the relatives of the queen-mother, of whom her brother, earl Rivers, with the marquis of Dorset, and lord Grey, her sons by her first marriage, were the chief; the other consisting of those nobles who despised the Woodvilles as upstarts, and envied and hated them for the power which they had engrossed during the last reign. The leaders of this party were the duke of Buckingham, himself descended from the youngest son of Edward III.; Lord Stanley, whose wife was the dowager countess of Richmond; and Lord Hastings, one of the late king's most trusted counsellors, who held the government of Calais, the most important military command in the kingdom.

At the death of Edward IV., the young king with his uncle, earl Rivers, to whom his father had especially committed the care of his education, was on the borders of Wales, at Ludlow; while the duke of Gloucester, his uncle, was in Scotland. On the news of his brother's death, Gloucester began to travel towards the south. At York he caused all the nobles of that district to swear allegiance to Edward, himself setting the example of taking the oath; and then proceeded to Northampton to meet him. Meanwhile the queen, who was in London, had written to Rivers to bring her son to the capital for his coronation; and he set out with a gallant retinue of 2000 horsemen. The queen would have wished him to be attended by a more formidable escort, sufficient to preserve all the power of the kingdom to her own relations, had she not been deterred from enforcing her wish by the energetic remonstrance of

A.D. 1483.

Hastings and the other nobles. She, however, acquiesced with a good grace. But lord Rivers and lord Grey, determined if possible to keep the young king in their own power, sought to prevent his meeting his uncle, and sent him forward to Stony Stratford, while they themselves repaired to Northampton to receive the duke. Richard was here met by Buckingham also; and after a long consultation with him and the other nobles of his train, he decided on arresting Rivers and Grey, and sending them under a guard to Pontefract; while he himself went forward to meet and do homage to his young nephew.

On the 4th of May, the day which had originally been fixed for his coronation, Edward entered London, preceded by Gloucester, who rode before him with his head bare, and was met by the lord mayor and the principal citizens, and conducted in state to the bishop's palace at St. Paul's. The queen, alarmed at the arrest of her kinsmen, had, with her younger son, taken sanctuary at Westminster; but as yet she seemed to have no further cause for alarm. The great council named Richard protector of the kingdom (and it was plain that no one else could have an equal claim to the office), assigned the young king the Tower for his residence, and fixed anew the 22nd of June for his coronation.

But, in spite of his high office, Gloucester was not at ease: according to all precedent the coronation of the young king would terminate his protectorate. Edward, under the natural influence of his mother, would probably release his uncles, whom Gloucester had already made his irreconcilable enemies; and it, perhaps, had some influence on his mind that the two last dukes of Gloucester, though both uncles of the reigning sovereign, had been put to death through the jealousy of the nobles. He resolved that he would not become a similar victim. What his cause of displeasure against Hastings was it is impossible to ascertain with certainty; it seems probable that he found that that lord (though, from jealousy of the Woodvilles, he would willingly have co-operated with him against them while they were in the ascendant), now that they were in confinement, recollected his old obligations to Edward IV., and sought to form a party among the friends of his children, which would be likely to counteract Richard's views. Whatever the protector's motive may have been, his conduct in this instance is certain. On the 10th of June he wrote letters to York, complaining that the queen was planning to destroy himself and Buckingham; and, on the 13th, he caused Hastings to be seized, while attending the council, and instantly beheaded on the green by the Tower chapel; justifying the act by the assertion that he had that very morning ascertained that Hastings had prepared the same fate for himself.

He connected him with a singular accomplice. Among the late king's numerous mistresses was a woman of the name of Jane Shore, the wife of a London merchant; of extreme beauty, and of a gentleness and sweetness of temper that won for her the indulgence of many, even among those who most disapproved of the criminality of her intercourse with Edward; especially as she was known to have constantly exerted her influence to soften his natural cruelty, and to dispose him to acts of humanity and mercy. Richard now accused her of being privy to Hastings' conspiracy; but feeling, perhaps, that it would be difficult to prove it, he did not press that charge, but caused her to be proceeded against in the ecclesiastical courts for incontinence. Her goods were confiscated; and she was condemned to do penance, walking barefoot through the streets with a taper in her hand, as a public spectacle. We can hardly attribute her punishment to any indignation on the part of Richard at her vicious career; but may probably suppose his object to have been, by thus directing general attention to Edward's dissolute life, to prepare the minds of the people for a fresh attack upon his memory, which should involve the right of his children to their inheritance.

For as he had now determined to seize the throne, he began rapidly to remove every obstacle from his path; and he had the address to procure the unanimous consent of the council to most of his measures. The young king was in his power; but his brother, the duke of York, was with his mother in the sanctuary at Westminster: it was dangerous to leave him at large, lest, on the deposition of his brother, the adherents of his family should rally round him as their head; so Richard induced the archbishop of Canterbury to beg the queen to suffer the young prince to join his brother, since the king grieved at being alone without his playmate. Elizabeth, with many tears, consented to part with him, and he was taken to the Tower. The next victim was Morton, bishop of Ely, a bold and able man, attached to the queen's party, and inclined to oppose the protector's designs, which were becoming sufficiently apparent; he was arrested, and sent down to Brecon, to the custody of Buckingham, who was constable of that castle. Rivers and Grey were still in confinement at Pontefract; but, on the 23rd of June, only ten days after the death of Hastings, so rapidly had the events recounted above succeeded each other, Ratcliffe, one of the boldest of Richard's friends, arrived there with an armed force; and, announcing that the prisoners had been convicted of treason, hurried them to instant execution.

All those whose opposition there was most reason to dread being thus removed, Richard proceeded openly to attack his nephew's right to the throne; founding his objection on the allegation that,

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before their father's marriage to the queen, he had been contracted to Eleanor Butler, a daughter of the earl of Shrewsbury: that therefore Elizabeth had never been his lawful wife, and that her children were illegitimate, and incapable of succeeding to the throne; that lady Eleanor Butler had been the king's mistress was notorious, but it was equally so that no one had ever heard of this pre-contract; and Richard himself had ignored it by swearing allegiance to his nephew; but he now employed his partisans to assert it in every direction. Dr. Shaw alleged it in a sermon at Paul's Cross, Buckingham dilated on it to the common council, and the next day headed a deputation of the lord mayor and aldermen, accompanied by many nobles and leading men of the house of commons, to entreat Richard to take upon himself the sovereign power, which his nephew, by reason of his illegitimate birth, was incapable of exercising. Richard protested, in reply, that he had no wish for such promotion; but presently allowed himself to be persuaded to consent to what Buckingham assured him was the irresistible determination of the people; and the next day, being the 26th of June, he proceeded in state to Westminster, where he made a speech to the assembled people as king; and the reign of Edward V. was terminated in little more than two months after his accession.

Richard was thirty years of age when he thus arrived at the summit of his ambition. The malicious fables of later days insisted so copiously on his deformity, and even on the preternatural monstrosities which, as they alleged, gave omen of the blackness of his heart, (for, if they were to be believed, he was not only humpbacked, with his right arm palsied from his birth, but he was actually born with the hair and teeth of a full-grown man,) that it may seem not out of place to say, that though distinguished neither by the stature nor by the beauty of feature of his eldest brother, he was nevertheless, possessed of a not unattractive countenance, and of great bodily vigour and activity, though apparently with high and somewhat uneven shoulders.

Ten days after his assumption of the throne he celebrated his coronation with great splendour; and the short interval that elapsed before that ceremony he employed in setting an example of those virtues which make sovereigns deservedly popular. He sat in the Court of King's Bench, examining personally into the just administration of the laws; behaved with courtesy and affability to all men, and issued a proclamation containing an amnesty for all offences previously committed by word or deed against himself. He then made a progress through the northern counties, and was crowned a second time in York; and, while thus occupied, he received from the foreign princes, to whom he had sent heralds to

notify his accession, a recognition of his authority, and from Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain a formal embassy, urging him to make war upon France, and promising him the aid of Spain in recovering the possessions in that country which his predecessors had enjoyed. He also made peace with James III. of Scotland, and on all occasions exhibited such liberal and enlarged views of domestic and foreign policy, as, if he had been a lawful sovereign, would have been calculated to render his reign glorious as well as prosperous.

But an usurped authority provokes resistance, and makes the usurper suspicious. Richard soon began to hear rumours of conspiracies; of meetings in the south and west of the kingdom to release the young princes, and to restore the elder to the throne; and it was even said that Buckingham, who had been the chief agent in his usurpation, and whom he had rewarded with vast estates and the most honourable offices, had repented of the part which he had acted, and was eager to make amends to his rightful king by effecting his restoration. To put an end to the interest thus shown in the welfare of his nephews, Richard caused a report to be spread that they were dead. How or when they had died was kept secret. In the next reign, the truth of the statement was doubted; and those doubts have been occasionally revived during the last century, and supported by such plausible arguments, that the fact can perhaps hardly be treated as absolutely certain; but the general belief was that, while at Warwick, he had despatched sir James Tyrrel to London with orders to put them to death, and that he and his servants had smothered them as they lay asleep in the Tower, and buried them secretly in that building.

But whether they were really dead or not, he deceived himself when he fancied that such a statement would put down all opposition to his own authority. It only made it the more formidable; first, by the general grief and indignation which it excited, and, secondly, by raising up another competitor for the throne, who, as being of mature age, was naturally a more dangerous rival than a child could be, and who also united the whole Lancastrian party, which was not yet extinct, in support of his cause. Henry V.'s widow, Catharine of France, had married sir Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman, and had had a son by him, whom the affection of his half-brother, Henry VI., raised to the dignity of earl of Richmond. His son Henry, the present earl, was known to be a man of considerable abilities, and was also connected with lord Stanley, who had married his mother. It is evident that this descent constituted no relationship whatever to the house of Lancaster; but the earl was connected in another way with John of Gaunt, as being, through his mother, the grandson of the earl of Somerset, the son of John, by Catharine Swynford, legitimated by act of Parliament on the

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duke's marriage with that lady, but by the same act barred for ever from all claim to the throne. This relationship, though real, was not more legally available than the other; but in the absence of any one else to set up with any probability of success, Richard's enemies agreed to consider the two defective titles as equivalent to one good one, and owned Henry as the head of the house of Lancaster; and bishop Morton, who was in Buckingham's custody at Brecon, proposed to that duke that he should be placed on the throne, provided he would marry the princess Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV., and, if her brothers were really dead, his sole remaining heir. It is strange that Buckingham should have agreed to this scheme so readily; for his own claim, as a genuine descendant of Edward III., was incomparably better than that of Henry, and he had certainly at one time thought of asserting it. However, he entered cordially into Morton's proposal. The queen dowager agreed to it, (a fact which goes far to prove that she believed in the death of her sons); and the consent of Henry himself could never have been doubtful. He himself was in Brittany; and the precipitation of his friends marred their plan for a time. He sailed from St. Malo, but the weather was so rough that he was unable to land. Before the news of his failure reached the conspirators in England, they had proclaimed him king in many of the southern and western counties; and Buckingham had formally raised his standard at the head of a small force in Brecon.

On the first news of this rising Richard instantly collected an army at Leicester. Buckingham also marched in that direction, expecting to be joined by large reinforcements on his way; but the same stormy weather that prevented Henry's arrival, impeded his progress. When he reached the Severn he found that great river so swollen, and the country around so flooded, that he could not advance. His followers, chiefly drawn from the principality, became impatient at the delay, and deserted him in great numbers; and at last he was forced to abandon all thought of proceeding, and sought concealment among his own dependents. Richard offered a large reward for his discovery, and he was betrayed, conveyed to Salisbury, and executed. Before he was put to death he made a full confession of the objects of the conspiracy, and of the names of the conspirators, most of whom escaped to Brittany. Henry himself was off Plymouth, still hoping to effect a landing in the west, when he heard of his fate, on which he also retreated to the same country, and began to prepare for a better organized renewal of his expedition.

Richard, encouraged, no doubt, by the failure of this attempt of his enemies, after taking the necessary steps to establish himself on his throne by procuring a recognition of his title from parlia-

ment, applied himself to the exercise of his authority in a manner which even his greatest detractors could not but acknowledge to be for the solid advantage, as well as for the honour of the nation. It seems wonderful how, in the short period of tranquillity that he was permitted to enjoy, he could find time for the consideration of the different matters to which he devoted his attention. He passed many laws, having for their object the ease and comfort of the common people, especially one forbidding the future exaction of benevolences, and sought to repress the power of the nobles, oppressive to the multitude beneath them, and, as he himself had already experienced, often dangerous to the sovereign, by regulations calculated to diminish the number of retainers which they kept about them, and prohibiting them from giving liveries and badges to any but their actual servants. He bestowed also liberal and discerning patronage on the arts, especially on that of architecture; encouraged commerce and navigation; though very fond of the chase, he disforested the large forest of Wychwood, in Oxfordshire, which Edward IV. had enclosed, and made extensive grants to many persons whose property had been injured in the late civil wars. In one respect he showed a magnanimity rare in that age, restoring the property of their husbands, or granting pensions to the widows of many even of those who had been especially opposed to himself: for instance, to lady Hastings and lady Rivers. His enemies after his death imputed these acts of wisdom and generosity to a dark and crooked policy; but it is fairer to attribute them to the natural impulses of a mind wise, energetic, and originally just and generous, though sadly warped at times by ambition, and led by that evil spirit to the commission of crimes alike unpardonable and unprofitable. He also made peace with Scotland, and agreed to give his niece, the daughter of the duke of Suffolk, to the eldest son of king James; and at the same time he declared her brother, the earl of Lincoln, his heir, in default of his own male issue.

While thus beneficently employed, however, he did not overlook the preparations making against him on the Continent, of which he had accurate information. As he apprehended that his chief danger from Henry lay in his proposed marriage with the princess Elizabeth, his first aim was to prevent that connexion; and with this view he made overtures to the queen dowager offering her a jointure for herself, and a portion for each of her daughters, and pledging his oath for their safety, if she would quit the sanctuary. Accordingly, she came to court, where she was received with great honour; and Richard would probably have obtained the princess for his own son Edward, had not that young prince died suddenly within a month of his reconciliation with his mother. Amid his

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grief, which was most severe, the king did not forget his political designs. His own wife, Anne, daughter of Warwick, was fast sinking into the grave; and he conceived the idea of becoming the husband of Elizabeth himself. Nor was the young princess averse to the proposal; but his most trusted councillors remonstrated so strongly against a connexion of so incestuous a character, that he, though very reluctantly, abandoned the idea.

In the mean time he had opened negotiations with the duke of Brittany, in the hope of getting Henry and his adherents delivered into his hands; but they, having timely warning of their danger, escaped into France, where they found the new king, Charles VIII., more able to aid them effectually than the duke could have been. In the summer of 1485, Richard heard that his rival was preparing to cross the Channel, at the head of 3000 men, whom he had raised in Normandy; and, at the same time, he received certain news that he would be supported by a powerful party in England. Especially he was warned to distrust lord Stanley; that nobleman had hitherto been his staunch adherent; but he had married the countess of Richmond, Henry's mother, and was more than suspected of being privy to the plans of her son. His influence was so great in Cheshire and Lancashire, counties which had long looked up to his family with affection and respect, and the reinforcements which he could bring from those districts were so important to any cause which he might espouse, that Richard was forced to allow him to quit the court to levy troops among his retainers, but detained his son, lord Strange, as a hostage, and Stanley could have no doubt that the young man's life depended on his own fidelity.

Richard fixed his head-quarters at Nottingham; both because he was especially sure of the attachment of the inhabitants of that and the adjacent districts, and because, from its central situation, it would enable him to meet the expected invader promptly, wherever he might land. He was not long left in suspense. On the 7th of August, Richmond landed at Milford, and marched through North Wales, hoping (as, through his grandfather Tudor, he claimed his descent from the ancient princes of the country) that the idea of supporting a native claimant of the throne would lead the Welsh to join his standard. It was also the nearest road to the estates of the Stanleys, on whose adhesion he reckoned with confidence. But the Welsh were lukewarm in his cause, and Stanley was kept inactive by his fears for his son; so that when Henry arrived at Shrewsbury, his army did not exceed 4000 men. Richard, always energetic and rapid in his movements, was not wanting to himself at such a crisis; he instantly summoned his adherents from all quarters; and his summons was obeyed by many of the chief nobles of the kingdom. The Howards brought up their followers

from the eastern counties ; the Percies joined him with the hardy borderers of the north ; lord Lovel led a stout band from Hampshire and the southern coast ; and when the whole army was collected at Leicester it amounted to 12,000 men, at least doubling the numbers of the force about to be opposed to them. Lord Stanley was also approaching with 7000 men, a host sufficient to turn the scale on either side. But, fearing for his son's life, he delayed his march, so as not to arrive till the battle was begun ; when, to the king's dismay, he ranged himself on the side of Richmond. On the 22nd of August, the two armies met at Bosworth, in Leicestershire. Richard fought as became a king whose crown was at stake ; he was always skilful and brave, and his skill and prowess were never more conspicuous. At last after making desperate efforts to maintain the day against the now superior numbers of his adversary, encouraged as they were by seeing that part of his own forces kept aloof from the contest, he perceived Richmond himself, and spurred towards him, hoping to end the conflict by his death. In his furious charge he struck down sir W. Brandon, his standard-bearer, sir John Cheyney, and other gallant knights of less renown, but was hemmed in by the Stanleys, and slain before he could reach his rival. Lord Stanley took the crown from off his helmet, and placing it on Richmond's head saluted him as King Henry VII. The body of Richard was thrown carelessly across a horse, and buried in the church of Grey Friars at Leicester.

From being the last of his line, and from having been superseded by a hostile dynasty, Richard has been more unfortunate as regards his reputation than any other sovereign ; even the defective title, and the very vices of his successor, have been his misfortune. Had Henry reigned by a valid right, or had he been a beneficent and popular king, he might have afforded to do justice to the virtues of his predecessor, and even to palliate, if he might not conceal, his errors. But his own utter want of any legal claim to the throne, and his consciousness of his general unpopularity, prompted him to endeavour to divert attention from his own pretensions and conduct to those of his predecessor, and to weaken Richard's character by every possible means. And the servile writers who lived in his reign were not ashamed to seek his favour by the most childish falsification of history.

The story of Richard's humpback and of his withered arm, so inconsistent with his notorious prowess as a warrior, and the still more monstrous fictions of his having been born with teeth and hair, would not injure his character, if true ; while such tales, if dispassionately considered, ought rather to benefit it, by showing the utter untruthfulness and folly of the witnesses against him.

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But in fact he is the worst witness against himself. In spite of many high and noble qualities, of great abilities, of eminent foresight, liberality, and magnanimity, he was, beyond most men, a slave to ambition :

“ By that sin fell the angels ; how can man then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by it ? ”

And that passion, the worst of masters when indulged to excess, led him to usurp the inheritance of his youthful nephews, who were entrusted to his care and protection as their nearest relative ; and, we may hardly doubt, to deprive them of their lives. Whether he really did put them to death or not, his execution of Hastings, Rivers, and Grey, without any trial, sufficiently shows an arbitrary, ruthless disposition, which regarded everything as of less consequence than the maintenance of his own ill-gotten power. No display of wisdom or virtue in the exercise of authority so acquired ought to blind us to the greatness of such crimes. Yet it is only fair to Richard to remark, that we ought not to judge such deeds by the standard of our own age, when right is better understood and human life more correctly valued. The religious character of an action is unchangeable, but its moral aspect must be determined in some degree by the habits and feelings of the age and nation in which it is done. Dunstan is revered as a saint for actions not less inhuman than those for which Gardiner and Bonner are held in universal detestation ; and the fifteenth century was an age of blood, in which scarcely any one scrupled at sweeping from his path, by any means in his power, all who were, or who seemed likely to be, an obstacle to his views. We may add that others, guilty of similar crimes in those ages, have been judged less harshly. Not to mention earlier instances, Henry IV. undoubtedly first deposed and then murdered his cousin ; yet he has never been held up to general execration ; and, except in the fact that Richard was the protector of his nephews, it is impossible to conceive cases more exactly parallel. When he had usurped the throne, his wisdom, energy, and proper feeling of what his subjects had a right to expect, produced them benefits which are surprising indeed, if the brief duration of his reign be considered. And we may say of him, that, though the crimes by which he raised himself to the supreme power shock all our best and holiest feelings, yet he used that power well, and displayed qualities which had he been allowed a longer and more tranquil period for their exercise, would have done much to atone for his earlier crimes, and entitled him to a more honourable place among the rulers of his nation.

CHAPTER XXV.

HENRY VII.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperor.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Maximilian . . .	1493	Charles VIII. . .	1483	Innocent VIII. . .	1484
<i>Spain.</i>		Louis XII. . .	1498	Alexander VI. . .	1492
Ferdinand and		<i>Scotland.</i>		Pius III. . .	1503
Isabella . . .	1475	James IV. . .	1489	Julius II. . .	1503

A.D.
1485
1509.



THE last years of the fifteenth century may be taken as the period which marks the commencement of modern history in most European countries. The invention of printing had begun to dissipate the dark ignorance which had overwhelmed the middle ages, and had opened the field of knowledge to the world, awakening every kind of genius, and stimulating every branch of study. The general introduction of the compass, leading man across the western ocean to America, and pointing out a safer and easier path to the orient banks of the Ganges, called forth, in a corresponding degree, the practical energies of the seaman, of the conqueror, and (at no distant period) of the missionary.

With these most important discoveries great political changes in the principal kingdoms of Europe were nearly coincident. The marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, the reigning sovereigns of Spain, and the subsequent expulsion of the Moors, had recently united the whole of that country into one compact monarchy. In France the unscrupulous craft of Louis XI., by the acquisition of Brittany and of a great part of the dominions of Charles the Bold, had greatly added to the safety and opulence of that kingdom, while the state of subjection to which he had reduced the turbulent nobles had equally increased the authority of the crown; and in England the same result had been brought about by the civil wars just terminated, and by the cruel proscriptions and executions by which the leaders of each side had disgraced their cause; so that many of the old families were extinct, and those which remained were generally too crippled in their means to be any longer as formidable as they had proved in past times to even the most able and powerful sovereigns.

The three centuries which had elapsed since the barons extorted the Great Charter from John, had been ages of almost incessant

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disturbance. There had been more than one civil war, four kings had been murdered in cold blood, four times the crown had fallen into the hands of an usurper, while long and distant wars, prompted by the unwise and fruitless hope of foreign acquisitions, had drained the resources and wasted the energies of the country. Yet among all these unfavourable circumstances, so congenial had been the soil in which the barons of Runnimeade had planted the sturdy tree of freedom, that it had constantly thriven, and, though not yet arrived at the noble proportions, under the shade of which we now sit so securely, it had already attained a sufficiently ample growth to afford a substantial shelter, though it might still occasionally happen that the storm of some sudden and brief tyranny might beat aside the branches, or drive the people for a while from under its protection.

The great principles of the constitution, already securely established, that no man could be kept in prison without a trial; that no laws could be made without the consent of parliament; and that no taxes could be imposed without the authority of the people's representatives, had protected the political rights of the subject against the arbitrary ambition which distinguished most of the kings of the house of Plantagenet. But the prosperity and happiness of the nation, which already struck intelligent foreigners as far superior to that of any other people, was perhaps owing still more to the regular and impartial administration of the law, with which, in general, no monarch or minister had ventured to tamper, though in individual cases they had often violated it by the unauthorized imprisonment, and even execution of obnoxious persons, and to the universal respect for the law which had, in consequence, been created in the minds of the people. What was most important of all things to the comfort and security of the lower orders was the fact, that the system of villeinage, which, as has been said before, was a system of slavery, had become gradually extinguished. It was not terminated by any law, but ceased by a natural decay, imperceptible in its progress, but one which we may hope originated in a gradual refinement of the moral feelings, which taught that for one man to possess a property in a fellow-man was a wrong and a crime, disadvantageous even to him who at first sight might appear to profit by it.

The export trade of the kingdom had become considerable, and the English merchants were honourably known, not only in Flanders, but in the more distant markets of the Italian cities, then the principal marts for the commodities of the east. The population had also greatly increased since the conquest, though not as rapidly as in our own times. Under William it amounted, as we have seen, to something more than a million and a half of persons. It

was now probably more than double that number ; and, what was of far more consequence to the future advancement of the whole than the mere increase of its numbers, instead of consisting of two different and hostile nations, the conquerors and the conquered ; of two antagonistic classes, the master and the slave, the three millions over whom Henry was now to rule formed one united and free nation.

Henry was twenty-nine years of age when he became king of England. In spite of his absence of hereditary right to the throne, his accession was hailed with joy by the nation, weary of the civil dissensions, and thankful for the prospect of their termination. It might have been fortunate for him, also, that he had not been mixed up hitherto with either party, so that he had made no personal enemies, if his jealous and suspicious temper had not prevented him from taking advantage of his neutral position. Proud of having been recognized as the head of the Lancastrian family, he looked upon the Yorkists as his enemies, and was greatly annoyed at the eagerness shown by the parliament that he should fulfil the compact, which his friends had made on his behalf, by marrying the princess Elizabeth, and also at the terms in which they settled the kingdom on himself and his heirs, avoiding as they did, all recognition of any hereditary right in him, and seeming to make his throne depend upon a mere parliamentary title. He resolved to counteract their views as far as he could by showing that he was able to dispense with any additional weight that his pretensions might be expected to derive from his marriage with the princess by deferring that ceremony till after his coronation.

It would have been well if his jealousy of the Yorkists had been confined to such negative measures ; but he had only been king two days when it led him into an act of cruel and needless tyranny. The duke of Clarence had left a son, the young earl of Warwick, fifteen years of age, whom Richard had detained in a sort of honourable confinement in the north. But Henry instantly sent for him to London, and consigned him to close imprisonment in the Tower, which the unhappy youth never quitted but for the scaffold : and, in a similar spirit, after the parliament had reversed the attainders pronounced against his adherents in the late reign,* he caused them to pass a similar act against the chief supporters of Richard, confiscated their estates, and likewise revoked all the grants which had been made by the crown since the duke of York had first been appointed protector the kingdom. To say nothing of the impolicy of thus openly declaring himself the king of a party, nothing could be more flagrantly unjust than to condemn as traitors

* Henry himself also had been attainted, but the judges decided that his attainder did not require a formal reversal, but was annulled of necessity by his accession to the throne.

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those who had fought for Richard, who was actually king, against himself, who never claimed that title till after Richard's death. But the forfeiture of their estates supplied him with the means of rewarding his own partisans; and this consideration outweighed all the claims of justice and policy. Those whose want of wealth rendered them unimportant he pardoned on their taking the oath of allegiance.

Among the victims of Henry's impolitic severity had been lord Lovel, who at first fled to a sanctuary; but the next spring, when Henry made a progress through the northern counties, he quitted his asylum, and endeavoured to avail himself of the late king's popularity in those districts to excite an insurrection. It was so unexpected that it very nearly succeeded, and was defeated only by the casual arrival of the earl of Northumberland with a numerous retinue, which had been merely intended to do honour to the new king, but which proved his preservation. Lovel escaped to Flanders, and his followers laid down their arms, and were pardoned.

Before the end of the year, Henry was greatly gratified by an embassy from James of Scotland, sent to renew the peace between the two nations, and by the birth of a son, to whom he gave the name of Arthur; but this latter event was so far from adding to his popularity, or from giving strength to his government, that it was probably among the causes of a strange attempt to subvert it. Henry's cold, reserved, and haughty manners were not calculated to make him acceptable to any class of his subjects, and were particularly distasteful to the nobles, who considered that he owed his throne to their influence and exertions, and who soon perceived his designs to destroy their power, and to render the crown independent of them. They were also, as most of them had belonged to the Yorkist faction, especially indignant at his treatment of the queen, whom he had not yet permitted to be crowned, nor to be his companion in his visits to the different important towns in the kingdom. The knowledge of these feelings on their part, and most probably the direct instigation of some of their body, prompted a priest of the name of Simonds to bring forward a boy, whose real name was Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker in Oxford, alleging that he was the earl of Warwick who had escaped from the Tower. He conducted him to Ireland, where he was received by the earl of Kildare, the governor of that island, and by all the chief nobles, as the prince. It was in vain that Henry produced the real earl, who was his prisoner in the Tower, and paraded him through the streets of London; his partisans proclaimed Simnel king in Ireland by the title of Edward VI., and prepared to invade England to assert his pretended rights.

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They were to be supported by a more formidable expedition. On the first news of this attempt, Henry had imprisoned the queen dowager and her son, the marquis of Dorset; and the earl of Lincoln, fearing for his own safety, had fled to Burgundy. Lincoln was the son of the eldest sister of Edward IV., and, after the earl of Warwick, was the head of the house of York. He was gladly received by the duchess of Burgundy, his aunt, who was unwearied in her hostility to Henry; and who now, after a consultation with him and Lord Lovel, gave them a force of 2000 veteran soldiers under the command of Martin Swart, a general of high reputation. They landed at Dublin, and uniting themselves with Simnel, crossed the Channel with him and a band of undisciplined Irish, and landed in Lancashire, in June, 1487. They had expected to be joined by numerous partisans in England, but the preposterous nature of Simnel's pretensions was too notorious; and they arrived in Nottinghamshire without having received any important accession to their force. Henry had collected at Newark an army far superior to theirs; and, on the 16th of June, he utterly defeated them at Stoke, a hamlet near that town. Swart, Lincoln, and Lovel were slain, and Simonds and his pupil were taken prisoners. They were treated by Henry with contemptuous mercy; Simonds was indeed imprisoned for life, but Simnel was pardoned and employed in a situation for which he was better calculated by his birth and education than for a throne, being made a scullion in the royal kitchen. Henry had less indulgence for those nobles whom he suspected of having been priy or favourable to his attempt; and he included in this list those who had given credence to a report which prevailed in some parts, that the rebels had been successful in the late battle. On all these he imposed enormous fines, thus gratifying his avarice and his ambition by the same measures, which not only filled his treasury, but disabled those whom he most feared, and prevented them from being dangerous to the crown in future.

The termination of this rebellion gave him a long period of tranquillity at home; but his attention was called to foreign affairs which caused him great anxiety, though in the end he contrived to make them also subservient to his darling object of amassing money.

Brittany was still an independent duchy; but Francis, the duke, had only one daughter, whose marriage was an object of ambition to more than one potentate. The Bretons would have been well pleased if she had become the wife of Henry himself, and he was not disinclined to such an alliance, though the superior advantages of marrying Elizabeth ultimately prevailed in his mind. The chief nobles of that country had lately revolted from Francis, had seized his minister, Peter Landois, and executed him as a criminal,

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and had then sought the aid of the king of France, who was eager to avail himself of any pretence to make himself master of that important principality. The duke of Brittany applied to Henry for aid, to which he considered that he had a claim from the protection and assistance which he had afforded him when earl of Richmond. Henry could not deny the reasonableness of his expectations, but was very unwilling to acknowledge them in any way which might involve him in war. Not that he was deficient either in courage or military skill; but he dreaded the expense of military operations; and he was also too suspicious of his subjects to be willing to put arms in their hands. Still he conceived it was very important for his interests to prevent the annexation of Brittany to France, and with this view he offered his mediation, which France was willing to accept, but which was rejected by the Breton court, who thought that his interest must at last compel him to espouse its cause as its ally; and so it probably would have done had not Henry trusted too much to the divisions in the French royal family, which he expected would prevent them from acting with vigour; and also to the energy and power of the archduke Maximilian, who was a suitor for the hand of Anne, the heiress of the duchy. He, therefore, had recourse to policy and intrigue; but as the Breton cause, or rather as any opposition to the designs of France, was popular in England, he connived at lord Woodville, the brother of the queen dowager, raising a body of troops and leading them to the assistance of the duke; but in July, 1488, they and their Breton allies were wholly defeated by the French at St. Aubin; and the death of the duke, which happened soon afterwards, completed the confusion and difficulties of his duchy.

Convinced at last that he could only save Brittany from becoming French by affording it active aid, he made an alliance with the young duchess, sending a small army to her assistance, on condition of her defraying the whole of its cost; but lord Willoughby de Broke, its commander, was baffled by the caution of the French generals, and returned to England without having effected any thing worthy of the military reputation of his country. The failure of this expedition gave additional strength to the French cause in Brittany; and at last, though the young duchess had been affianced to Maximilian, and though Charles, the king of France, had been contracted to Maximilian's daughter Margaret, who had, in consequence, been sent to Paris for her education, Charles sent Margaret back to Germany, and besieged the young duchess in Rennes, who, unable to maintain the town against the powerful force which attacked it, submitted, though with great reluctance, to the advice of her wisest councillors, and, in December, 1491, gave her hand to Charles, and, by so doing, for ever united her duchy to his kingdom.

Henry's policy had been to make a firm ally of Maximilian, in order to bridle the growing power of France; and, with this view, he had assisted him to reduce the revolted Flemings, who were supported by Charles; and his general, lord Daubeney, had contributed greatly to the victory gained over the French at Dixmude, which established the archduke's authority in the province. Maximilian had now suffered a double affront, in having his affianced wife wrested from him and his daughter rejected; and Henry, besides his obligation to assist him, was induced by personal considerations to seek to revenge himself on Charles, since, to the disappointment of his political views was added the annoyance of having been outwitted by a boy (for Charles was little more) possessed of no kind of ability. But, after a while, his indignation cooled down, and he contrived to compensate himself for it in a way peculiarly his own. He announced his intention of carrying war into France, and, in spite of the act passed in the late reign, levied a benevolence on his subjects of unprecedented amount; which, besides the vastness of the extortion, was celebrated for the ingenuity with which Morton, who had been raised to the primacy, and was also chancellor of the kingdom, put aside all excuses on the part of those who were unwilling to contribute. If they lived frugally, he told them that their frugality must have enriched them: did they maintain a splendid appearance, or a hospitable table, he argued that those who could afford such expense could certainly afford to contribute to the vindication of the honour of their sovereign and his kingdom; and this dilemma, which was popularly called Morton's fork, was irresistible in the unscrupulous hands of Henry's commissioners. Parliament also voted him a large supply, and the chief nobles put themselves to vast expense in preparing to take the field in a manner suited to the previous military renown of their country, and to the glory which they themselves expected to reap. But military glory was too expensive a luxury to attract the taste of the king. Under pretence of the war he had collected a vast treasure from his subjects; and, even before he crossed the Channel, he had begun to contrive how to extract a further sum from the French king. To give some appearance of reality to his operations he laid siege to Boulogne; but, six weeks after his first landing in France, he made peace with Charles, who desired leisure for the invasion of Italy; and who agreed to pay him three-quarters of a million of crowns, and an annual pension of 25,000 more. Henry thus, to use the words of Bacon, sold war to his subjects and peace to his enemies, and the profit which he made fully reconciled him to his disappointment with respect to the French acquisition in Brittany.

It was not, however, to be expected that his subjects, who did

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not profit by it, would look upon this disgraceful transaction with the same complacency. Accordingly, their indignation was great ; and a singular attempt was now made to take advantage of the king's unpopularity.

A report had got abroad that the young princes said to have been murdered in the Tower in the last reign, had not been really put to death, but that one, at least, of them had escaped and was alive ; and about the end of the year 1491 a youth landed at Cork, asserting himself to be Richard, the younger of the two. In person he was remarkably like his assumed father, Edward IV. ; and this fact, joined to the plausibility of the account which he gave of himself, obtained him many powerful partisans in Ireland. He was invited to France and acknowledged by Charles as the rightful heir of the Plantagenets ; though, as soon as peace was concluded between the two kingdoms, Henry procured his dismissal from that country. He then proceeded to Burgundy, to the court of the dowager duchess, whom he claimed for his aunt. She, professing to have been rendered cautious by the imposture of Simnel, subjected him to a rigorous public examination, questioning him on numerous points connected with his previous history ; till at last she professed herself to be perfectly satisfied, acknowledged him for her nephew, and gave him a guard of honour and the appellation of the White Rose of England. Henry became seriously alarmed, and sent emissaries in every direction to discover who this young man really was. After a time they reported that his real name was Perkin Warbeck, the son of a merchant at Tournay. He sent news of this discovery to the duke of Burgundy, demanding that Warbeck should be banished from his dominions ; and when the duke replied that it was beyond his power to interfere with the duchess's management of her own estates, he prohibited all commercial intercourse between that country and England. To satisfy the minds of the English, he then compelled sir James Tyrrel to give an account of the murder of the princes, in which deed he was supposed to have been the chief actor. But as, though Tyrrel was said to have affirmed that the bodies were buried at the foot of the staircase, the most rigorous search failed to discover them, his confession did not obtain universal credit. It began to be known that several nobles of character and influence had expressed their belief in the truth of Warbeck's statements. Several were instantly arrested and put to death ; and the whole nation was startled at finding that sir William Stanley was one of the victims. He had contributed, more than any man in the kingdom, to place the crown on Henry's head : he had been greatly trusted by him, and was lord chamberlain at the time. The charge on which he was condemned was never precisely divulged, but many argued that if he had

asserted a belief in the genuineness of Warbeck's pretensions, such a man must have had ample opportunity of learning the truth, and solid grounds for his opinion: while, in the judgment of others, his real crime was the greatness of his wealth, which, as the necessary consequence of a conviction for treason, was forfeited to the crown.

It was above three years after his first appearance in Ireland before Warbeck attempted to land in England. In the summer of 1495, he appeared off the Kentish coast; but those of his followers who disembarked first were instantly dispersed, and taken prisoners, and, without attempting to land himself, he retired to Flanders; when the failure of this attempt, the apparent security of Henry's position, and the injury done to his own subjects by the suspension of all commerce with England, induced the duke of Burgundy to consent to the demands which he had previously evaded; and as the price of a commercial treaty, of great advantage to his Flemish provinces, he agreed to refuse shelter to Henry's enemies, and likewise to compel the dowager duchess to close her dominions against them.

Warbeck, now deprived of all refuge on the Continent, repaired to Scotland, where James IV. not only acknowledged the truth of his story, but also gave him a cousin of his own, the lady Catharine Gordon, in marriage, and made an inroad into the northern counties of England to support his pretensions. The Scotch invasion, however, did not dispose the English nobles in general to look more favourably on his cause. The Scots were always regarded with jealous hostility by the parliament, who now willingly voted Henry a considerable supply to enable him to chastise them. Among the lower orders, however, this fresh tax caused great discontent, which in Cornwall broke into open rebellion. The Cornishmen advanced towards London, and in Somersetshire were joined by lord Audley, who, placing himself at their head, conducted them to the very gates of the metropolis; but Henry had prepared to receive them with numbers far superior to their own; and in a battle, which took place on Blackheath, the rebels were totally defeated, their leaders taken prisoners, and executed.

Henry's address and resolution triumphed over all attacks of his enemies; and James of Scotland despairing of effectually shaking his throne, and having perhaps gained one of his objects in the ample spoils with which his late inroad had enriched his army, made a truce with him, and, to secure his friendship, desired Warbeck to quit Scotland. He betook himself to Cornwall, where a considerable number of the populace flocked to his standard; and, at the head of 3000 men, he advanced eastward, and laid siege to Exeter, assuming, for the first time, the title of king of England by

A. D. 1497.

the name of Richard IV. Henry hastened to the west at the head of a considerable army; and Warbeck, hearing of his advance, raised the siege of Exeter, and, with a force which was now swelled to 7000 men, prepared to engage the royal troops. The two armies came in sight of each other near Taunton, not far from the spot where nearly 200 years afterwards Monmouth fled before the life-guards of James; but Warbeck displayed even less courage than that unhappy adventurer. Before a blow was struck he fled from the field, and sought a sanctuary in the New Forest. At last, on the promise of pardon, he surrendered himself, and made a full confession of his whole imposture; but soon, impatient of the confinement in which he was kept, he escaped, and a second time fled to a sanctuary. A second time he surrendered, on promise of safety for his life. He was now set in the stocks, compelled to read his confession to the populace, and then imprisoned in the Tower. On again attempting to escape he was seized, and hanged at Tyburn. His wife, the lady Catharine, had fallen into Henry's hands on her husband's flight from Taunton, and was honourably received by him, and made one of the queen's attendants. At a subsequent period she married a knight named sir Matthew Cradock, and was buried with him in the church of Swansea.

The fate of Warbeck drew with it that of a nobler victim. While in the Tower he had made acquaintance with the young earl of Warwick, who had joined him in his attempt to escape. It was not pretended that Warwick had ever been guilty of any crime; but for this natural endeavour to regain his liberty he was tried, condemned, and executed, the last victim to Henry's jealousy of the house of York.

Henry was now so manifestly secure on his throne, and that security was also so clearly owing to his own vigour and ability, that he began to be greatly courted by foreign princes, and formed connexions with them of a more extensive nature than had been entered into by any former king. As early as the year 1489 he had concluded a treaty with the Spanish sovereigns, which, besides uniting the two kingdoms in an offensive and defensive alliance against France, provided for the marriage of the prince of Wales, a child a year and a half old, with the Infanta Catharine, a princess about two years older. By a series of compacts which equally show his insincerity and the importance attached to his friendship, he subsequently concluded other treaties; one with Charles VIII. of France at Etaples, and another against him with Spain and the Italian princes at Venice, while the pope named him the chief defender of Christendom; and so great was his influence at Rome, that he obtained a bull countenancing the rigid reformation, which, with the aid of Archbishop Morton, he began to institute among

the clergy and monastic orders. Pope Alexander's favour was probably purchased in some degree by a more rigorous enforcement of the laws against heresy ; for, towards the end of the century numbers of persons were brought to trial on that charge, and several of both sexes who were convicted were condemned to the flames. His influence extended even beyond the boundaries of Europe ; and the knights of Rhodes chose him as the protector of their order, already foreseeing the hostility of the Turks, and their own inability to withstand it without assistance.*

Perhaps no circumstance is calculated to give a greater idea of the importance attached by foreign countries to the English alliance in this reign than the events which arose out of the Spanish marriage. It took place in November, 1501, and, when four months afterwards the young bridegroom died, Ferdinand and Isabella at once proposed to betroth his widow to his brother, afterwards Henry VIII., though that prince was hardly eleven years old. The king, when in the autumn of the same year queen Elizabeth died, would, it seems, have preferred marrying her himself ; but easily as most scruples on such subjects were dispensed with in that age, such a connexion appeared to Isabella too unnatural to be tolerated ; and she proposed to him instead a marriage with her niece the queen of Naples, who had likewise recently become a widow. That proposal failed, because the queen's dowry was not sufficient to tempt Henry's avarice. But the inducements to the other were stronger. If the princess Catharine returned to Spain the portion of her dowry which had already been received must have been refunded ; while, on the other hand, so eager were the Spanish sovereigns to maintain the connexion with England that they offered, if she were at once married to prince Henry, to assist the king to recover Normandy and Guienne. These combined inducements decided him ; and eventually a dispensation to permit the marriage was obtained from the pope ; though the young prince, who during his brother's lifetime had been designed for the church, openly expressed doubts of the lawfulness of such an union. Henry was more impatient to arrange a new marriage for himself ; apparently from a resolution to cement his alliance with Spain by some means or other. He proposed to marry Margaret the sister of the archduke Philip, husband of Juanna, who by the death of Isabella, had lately become queen of Castile : she refused him ; and on Philip's death which happened shortly after, he offered himself to Juanna, who was notoriously insane, and induced Ferdinand to promise to further this strangest of all love suits ; though he had recently insulted both her and Philip in the grossest manner. On a voyage from Flanders to Spain they had

* Rhodes was taken in the next reign, 1522, by Solyman the Magnificent.

A.D. 1501.

been forced by a storm to put into Weymouth, and Henry would not allow them to depart till he had extorted from them a commercial treaty, on terms very advantageous to the English; and till he had compelled Philip to surrender to him the earl of Suffolk, the younger brother of the earl of Lincoln, who had fallen at the battle of Stoke.

Henry was more beneficially employed in passing several new and salutary laws for the internal government of his kingdom; especially one in England, which enacted that from that time forward no one should be accounted guilty of treason for obeying the sovereign in possession of the throne; and one in Ireland, known as the statute of Drogheda, or of Poynings, from sir Edward Poynings, the lord Deputy, by which the English code was established there, and the consent of the English ministry was declared indispensable to the introduction of any new bill in the Irish parliament: a measure which was rendered necessary at the time, by the influence which the adherents of the house of York still retained in that island: and of which a series of troubles prevented the revocation for nearly three hundred years.

Almost equally advantageous to the welfare of the kingdom was the encouragement which he gave to commerce, and to the dawning zeal for maritime discovery. Very early in his reign the great Columbus had sent his brother Bartholomew to his court, to lay before him those splendid designs, the realization of which has made his name immortal; and Henry would have patronized his undertaking, if he had not been anticipated by the sagacious decision of queen Isabella. He did send out Sebastian Cabot a few years afterwards, who discovered Newfoundland, and was the first European who ever reached the American continent. The regulations with which he encumbered trade were less salutary, though as the advantages of unrestricted competition were the discovery of a later age, his inability to appreciate them cannot be fairly argued to indicate any deficiency in political sagacity.

Even Scotland, by natural position, by long habit, and by its alliance with France, the most inveterate enemy of England, yielded to the influence of his unvaried success, and a permanent peace was made between the two countries, which was cemented by Henry's giving his eldest daughter, Margaret, in marriage to king James; a marriage by which the projects of Edward I. were ultimately realized, when, a century afterwards, James VI. of Scotland succeeded to the English throne, and for ever united the two nations into one kingdom.

The latter years of Henry's reign have contributed greatly to load his memory with discredit. Covetousness had always been his ruling passion; and it is one which is particularly apt to gain

strength with increasing years. He was already the richest prince in Christendom, but, not content with the treasures he had already amassed, he began to extort money from his subjects by the most shameful expedients, and the most open perversions of justice. He found two unprincipled lawyers, named Empson and Dudley, whom he raised to the dignity of barons of the exchequer, and who disgraced themselves and their profession by pandering with every resource of legal ingenuity to the wicked rapacity of their sovereign. False accusations were invented against innocent persons, with no other object but that of extracting money from them by way of fines and forfeitures. Spies and informers were encouraged. The king's pardon to the grossest criminals was openly sold, and his favour to the most innocent or meritorious was only to be procured by a bribe. The preferments of the Church, the confirmation of notorious rights, the appointments to the most paltry offices, were all alike made matters of traffic. No person was so great as to be out of the reach of these harpies, no bribe so paltry as to be beneath their master's rapacity. Nearly 70,000*l.* were extracted from lord Abergavenny, while poor men were allowed to obtain their objects at as low a rate as twenty shillings. It was to little purpose, while these iniquities were being perpetrated, that the king caused his chancellor to harangue the parliament on the beauty of law and justice. Such words, in such mouths, were worse than a mockery, and only added to the detestation in which the king and his favourites were held by the people.

Henry's health, though he had only reached middle age, had been for some time failing, and his ailments at last terminated in consumption, of which he died, at Richmond, on the 22nd of April, 1509, in the fifty-second year of his age, and the twenty-fourth of his reign.

Henry was a prince in whom, though the good qualities in fact predominated over the bad, yet the bad ones were of such a character, that the dislike which they excited outweighed the respect which the good ones might have engendered. For his good qualities were those of the head, and appeal only to men's reason. His bad qualities were those of the heart, and such as especially grate upon men's feelings. He was courageous, though not daring; sagacious in forming plans, resolute in adhering to them; calm in hours of tumult and perplexity; and possessed of so much skill and address in extricating himself from peril and difficulty, that in spite of the various insurrections which broke out in his reign, and his general and constantly increasing unpopularity, his throne was never endangered for a moment. He was always a lover of peace, and steady in maintaining it, though apparently chiefly from the sordid motive of sparing his own treasures. He was not fond of

A.D. 1509.

shedding blood, though his treatment of lord Warwick is alone sufficient to prove that his regard for human life was not such as to interfere for a moment with any steps which he considered desirable for the advancement of his own views, or the preservation of his own power. On the other hand, he was entirely cold-hearted and selfish, utterly destitute of gratitude or affection, jealous of his nearest relations, suspicious of his most faithful servants, cold, reserved, and devoid of all frankness, candour, generosity, or magnanimity. To these negative vices he added the most grasping and universal covetousness, and the most sordid avarice, prompting him sometimes to acts of the most contemptible meanness, at others to the most lawless and cruel extortion. Still, as these bad qualities chiefly concerned individuals, while his good qualities affected the state, the kingdom increased in prosperity and power during his reign; and, as foreign statesmen looked rather at the result of his government than at the means by which that result was obtained, and were less scrupulous than even at the present time in weighing the personal character of a successful ruler, he was generally looked up to abroad as an able and excellent sovereign, and England had never perhaps been considered of greater importance than she was at his death.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HENRY VIII.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Maximilian.		Louis XII.		Julius II.	
Charles V.	1519	Francis I.	1515	Leo X.	1513
<i>Scotland.</i>		<i>Spain.</i>		Adrian VI.	1521
James IV.		Ferdinand.		Clement VII.	1523
James V.	1513	Charles V.	1516	Paul III.	1534
Mary	1542				

A.D.
1509.

HENRY VIII. was little more than eighteen years old at his father's death, and came to the throne with very great advantages, both personal and political. The excessive unpopularity of his father disposed the nation to welcome any change with joy, and his own personal beauty and splendour of appearance, his reputation for ability, his

youth, and lively, cordial manners, secured him very general favour on his own account. As has been already said, the authority of the crown had been greatly increased by the civil wars, which had destroyed most of those great nobles who, in earlier times, had been separately almost equal, and, when combined, far superior in power to the sovereign; and those who remained had been greatly impoverished by the expenses and ravages of war, and their depression had been studiously increased during the past reign. Abroad, to the military reputation of the kingdom, which had always been pre-eminent, the late king had added a character for political sagacity, which had not hitherto been thought the characteristic of the English, but which had seemed all that was wanting to render them considerable in every respect; so that on his accession Henry was powerful at home, and influential abroad, in a degree which perhaps none of his predecessors had equalled.

Before the death of his elder brother he had been destined for the Church, and the education which had been given to him with that view had imbued his mind with a taste for literature, though chiefly of the theological and polemical kind, which had a great effect upon his conduct in more than one important instance.

His first act was to complete his marriage with the princess Catharine of Aragon, the widow of his brother Arthur, in respect of which his father had exhibited a strange and unaccountable vacillation of purpose. Even after he had procured a papal dispensation to permit it, he had compelled or permitted his son to protest against it as forbidden by the divine law; then he seemed to have put aside those scruples, and professed only to be waiting for the completion of the payment stipulated as Catharine's dowry; complicating the matter still further by the different projects for his own marriage which have already been described. These delays, and Ferdinand's inability to pay the whole sum promised as the princess's dowry, prevented any further steps being taken during the lifetime of Henry VII. But just after his death a third instalment of it was sent, and the young king assured the Spanish ambassador of his attachment to the princess, and of his resolution to complete his marriage with her immediately. The question of its legality was debated in the council, and, though Warham, the primate, was adverse to it, the majority decided that it was both lawful and advisable, and formally recommended it to the king, who willingly adopted such palatable advice, and, on the 3rd of June, they were married, though many of the people followed the opinion of the archbishop, and doubted the lawfulness of the connexion.

His next step was far more generally acceptable, though it certainly was not more in accordance with law. Empson and Dudley

A.D. 1511.

were universally detested as the ministers of his father's extortions, and the king was willing to sacrifice them to the general indignation. He arrested them and committed them to the Tower; but, as it was not easy to show what statute they had broken in the letter, or what penalty they had incurred, he permitted them to be impeached of offences which they undoubtedly had not committed, and of which no evidence was even attempted to be produced, and, when they had been convicted, signed the warrant for their execution as guilty of high treason.

The first two years of the new reign were years of peace, and, being such, they allowed Henry leisure to gratify his taste for splendour and pageantry, such as had never been seen in England, and in which he dissipated the greater part of the vast treasures which his father had hoarded and bequeathed to him. But at the end of that time he was induced to join the league which pope Julius was forming against Louis XII., with the object of expelling the French from Italy. The pope sent him a sacred rose, which had received the apostolic benediction; but the bait which chiefly attracted him to engage in a war, in which he could have no possible concern, was the hope that Julius would deprive Louis of the title of Most Christian King, and transfer it to himself; so childish were the motives for which kings in those ages did not hesitate to plunge nations in war.

A war with France was always popular in England, and parliament readily voted supplies. An army of 10,000 men was placed under the command of lord Dorset, and, as Louis's power was greatly weakened by his losses in his Italian campaigns, the whole nation was fired with the hope of recovering Normandy, and the other provinces in France which had formerly belonged to the English crown. But king Ferdinand, Henry's father-in-law, who knew better than most men how to make others labour in his service, had the art to persuade him not to invade France on the northern frontier, but rather to land in Fontarabia, where, as that province was close to the Spanish borders, he could be aided by a Spanish force to recover Guienne; and he offered to send a fleet to transport the English army to that coast. Dorset soon found out that Ferdinand's real object was to possess himself of the small kingdom of Navarre, which lay in the north-east of Spain, between that kingdom and France; and, as he had no orders to co-operate in any such undertaking, and found that Ferdinand had not the least intention of fulfilling his promises of aiding him in an invasion of Guienne, he returned home again, and endeavoured to convince his master of the selfish character of Ferdinand's policy.

The winter was spent in preparing for a second invasion on

the side more exposed to an attempt from the English coast ; and, early in 1513, the king himself sailed for Calais with 25,000 men. An indecisive action, in which sir Edward Howard, the English admiral, was killed, took place between the fleets of the two countries : but the chief efforts of each were reserved for the land. Henry himself loitered for some time at Calais, delighting the citizens with the unusual magnificence of his revelry and kingly state, and professing to wait till he was joined by his allies. But the other party to the league, the emperor Maximilian, whose empty treasury had gained him the nickname of the Moneyless, brought him but a very scanty reinforcement ; substituting for any aid of importance the flattery of calling himself a captain in his service, and receiving, as such, one hundred crowns a day, a pay which was as acceptable to his necessities as the compliment was to Henry's vanity.

Before Henry left Calais, his lieutenants, lord Shrewsbury and lord Herbert, had laid siege to Terouenne ; and the town, though gallantly defended, was reduced to such distress that the French generals who commanded a considerable force in the neighbourhood, though restrained by the express orders of Louis from hazarding a battle for its relief, determined to make an attempt to throw in supplies of food and ammunition. A strong body of cavalry was stationed in the heights of Guinegate to attract the attention of the besiegers, while Fontrailles, one of the most daring of the French captains, who had already succeeded in one attempt made on a smaller scale, was to ride up to the walls with a body of light horse, each man carrying behind him a bag of powder, and another of salt pork. But Maximilian, who, in spite of the subordinate position which he had chosen, was a skilful general, and, as such, had a principal voice in the operations, comprehending the whole design, moved a heavy force of English and German cavalry to the rear of the troops on Guinegate, to cut off their retreat. They, when they saw themselves intercepted, began to retire, and fell back on a rear-guard of cavalry so precipitately, that the two squadrons only threw one another into confusion. The English pressed on. The French commanders (the annals of their nation had no names more honoured than those of La Palisse, Bussy D'Amboise, Longueville, D'Imbercourt, and Bayard) strove in vain to keep order in their ranks, but all was confusion and dismay. Bayard, the knight who knew no fear, and never deserved reproach, made almost superhuman efforts to rally his countrymen, and to check the advance of the enemy, but in vain. He himself was taken prisoner, with several other knights, and the whole force was utterly routed. The slaughter was trifling, for, except Bayard, the French scarcely struck a blow ; and the English

A.D. 1513.

could not overtake the flying foe. No one could impute cowardice to the knights of France, and above all to such as were engaged on that day, so that their sudden panic brought rather ridicule than shame upon them; and the conflict received the name of the battle of the Spurs, those being the weapons chiefly used by the defeated party.

The victory, however, which in skilful hands might have been productive of decisive consequences, since it deprived Louis of the services of the most celebrated warriors of his army, only served to show the utter incapacity of Henry to conduct military operations. Being bold and daring, and possessed of great bodily strength and address in the use of arms, he was always eager to mix personally in the conflict; and in time of peace, there was no amusement of which he was so fond as of jousts and tournaments, and other athletic sports, in which he rarely found his equal; but for the conduct of war he had no genius whatever, and Maximilian, though far more able, was led away by his own petty and selfish objects; so that, instead of advancing the whole army, and overpowering the French infantry with their superior numbers, which would have placed all the north of France, and the metropolis at their mercy, they returned to the siege of Terouenne, which was soon taken and dismantled of its fortifications, and then laid siege to Tournay, a French city on the Flemish frontier, the capture of which was a great security to Maximilian's Flemish dominions, but could have little effect on the general issue of the war. Tournay soon fell; and as the bishopric of the see was vacant at the time, Henry bestowed it on his new favourite, Wolsey, a man whose remarkable career and extraordinary talents deserve a more particular notice.

Thomas Wolsey, born in 1471, afterwards cardinal archbishop of York, chancellor of England, and the most powerful subject that the kingdom has ever seen, was the son of a butcher at Ipswich; but, as he very early showed unusual abilities, his father sent him to Oxford, where he distinguished himself and became a fellow of Magdalen College, and afterwards tutor to the sons of the marquis of Dorset, chaplain to the primate, and at last to Henry VII. himself. He had eminently the talent of making himself acceptable to those from whom he looked for promotion; and having been selected by the king to go on an embassy to Maximilian, at the time that he was anxious to marry his daughter Margaret, he executed his commission with such despatch, and such diplomatic ability, that he fixed himself firmly in the favour of his sovereign; and, when he died, he was recommended by his former pupil, who, by the death of his father, had become marquis of Dorset, to the new king. He now laid aside the gravity of demeanour, and regularity

of conduct, which he had assumed for the last year or two; and, by entering into all the young sovereign's humours, and joining in all the revelry and dissipation of the court, he so ingratiated himself with him, that in a very short time he supplanted even lord Surrey, the most trusted minister of the late king, and at first the favourite companion of Henry himself. He was appointed the royal almoner, and though this office gave him no political authority, he soon managed to acquire that, persuading the king, who cared for nothing but his pleasure, not to vex himself about business, which was distasteful to him, but to allow him to be present at the council in his stead. Henry willingly gave him the permission which he required; and from this time forth Wolsey was, in fact, the prime minister of the kingdom; and, in 1512, he received the formal appointment of Lord Treasurer. Not long afterwards he became archbishop of York, chancellor, cardinal, and legate of the pope; and the pomp and magnificence which he displayed was such as had scarcely ever been equalled by the proudest sovereign. His household, in which even barons and earls condescended to hold office, consisted of 800 persons; and when, in the latter years of his life, he went on an embassy to France, he required Francis I. to receive him as his equal; that sovereign actually brought his whole court to Amiens, half-way between Paris and Calais, to receive him, alighted from his horse to embrace him, and treated him in every respect as he had demanded.

For the last seventeen years of his life the history of the kingdom is identified with that of this powerful minister. Through the depression of the aristocracy, and the timidity and servility of both houses of parliament, the power of the king in this reign was little short of absolute, and the whole of that power was wielded by Wolsey. The most powerful monarchs sought to propitiate him by the most lavish gifts, and the most monstrous flattery; and some of the most important events which took place in Europe had their origin in his ambition or resentment.

The news of the battle of the Spurs had scarcely reached England, when its fame was eclipsed by a far more important victory. James IV. of Scotland had, or fancied that he had, several just causes of complaint against the English; and the absence of Henry in France appeared to offer him a favourable opportunity of obtaining that redress by force of arms, which he could not procure by negotiation. He was eager also to make an effective diversion in favour of his ally, king Louis; and, with a head full of the chivalrous romance which in bygone days had prompted many an absurd enterprise, and also many a heroic deed, but which was now almost extinct, he burned to merit the favour of Anne of Brittany, the queen of France, who had sent him a ring and one

A.D. 1514.

of her gloves, and charged him, as her knight, to merit her favour by the invasion of England. It was a circumstance of no weight with him, that his queen was Henry's sister; in fact, one of his complaints against Henry was, that he refused to give up the jewels which her father had bequeathed to her. James levied an army of above 50,000 men, crossed the Tweed, and took several of the fortresses, which were erected to defend the English border. Surrey, who was commanding in the north, marched with little more than half his numbers to check his ravages; and, on his arrival in the valley of the Tweed, found the Scottish army strongly posted on Flodden, one of the Cheviot hills.

Who, after Scotland's poet, shall tell of Scotland's defeat? Surrey crossed the Till, a deep brook on the Scottish flank, without interruption, as James, in the true spirit of a knight-errant, had boasted to him that he did not place his trust in the ground, but would encounter him on a fair field. When the whole English army had crossed the water James set fire to his baggage, and descended from the hill, the smoke hiding his march so completely, that the two armies came almost to close quarters before they saw each other. The battle was stubbornly contested. Though the English army was inferior in number, in artillery it was far superior. The right wings of both armies were broken and almost routed. The centres, where James and Surrey fought in person, long maintained a doubtful struggle. It had been four o'clock in Sept. 9, the afternoon before the battle began; and it continued till

1513. it was terminated by the night, when Surrey drew off his men, as yet uncertain what had been the result of the contest. The next morning, however, showed him the Scottish host in full retreat; they had already ascertained the irreparable magnitude of their loss. The numbers of the slain had been nearly equal on both sides; but while the loss of the English was confined to the common soldiers, scarcely any knight of more than ordinary reputation being included among the slain, the Scots had to lament the death of all their principal nobility, and of James himself, who fell fighting among the foremost, within a lance's length of Surrey's banner; so that though, in some respects, it was almost a drawn battle, it had all the consequences of the most fatal defeat; and there is no province of Scotland, even at this day, where it is mentioned without a sensation of terror and sorrow.

The war, which had been raging over the whole Continent, was suddenly put an end to by the death of pope Julius, and the raising of Leo X. to the papacy. The new pope, an accomplished, and, in some respects, an able man, with neither genius nor taste for war, immediately on his promotion sent circular letters to the different princes to exhort them to make peace, and revoked the

A.D. 1514.

censures which his predecessor had pronounced against Louis. That sovereign, whom the confederacy against him had nearly ruined, had already begun to break it up, by working on the selfish ambition of king Ferdinand, who, now that he had made himself master of Navarre, was not inclined to make further efforts for objects which could produce him no personal aggrandizement, and was easily won by the offer of Louis to give his second daughter, Renée, in marriage to his grandson Charles, with his claim to the duchy of Milan for her dowry; and as Charles was also the grandson of Maximilian, the emperor was easily persuaded to accede to the treaty, of which so desirable a condition was to be the basis.

Henry was very indignant at finding his allies thus prepared to desert him; and the more so, because Charles had been affianced to his own sister Mary; and his feelings of irritation were skillfully taken advantage of by the duke de Longueville, who had been his prisoner since the day of the Spurs; and who, as Louis's queen, Anne of Brittany, was lately dead, now proposed to him an alliance between his master and the princess Mary. Henry gladly embraced the idea, and in a very short time peace was concluded, and the marriage was celebrated in October, 1514. But the gaiety and festivity which ensued proved too much for the strength of Louis, who, though little more than fifty years of age, had long been in bad health; and on the first day of the next year he died, leaving his kingdom, as he had no male children, to his cousin and son-in-law, the duke d'Angoulême, who ascended the throne with the title of Francis I.

The death of Louis had very nearly had the effect of dissolving the peace so lately made between France and England, as Francis was not inclined to aid Wolsey in obtaining full possession of the bishopric of Tournay, when Ferdinand of Spain died, and was succeeded by his grandson Charles, who was already, in right of his father the archduke Philip, sovereign of Flanders, and whose power and authority were such that Francis saw the necessity of allying himself closely with Henry, if he would preserve an equality on the Continent with so dangerous a rival. He now therefore, paid the most eager court to Wolsey, gave him, as an equivalent for the revenues of the see of Tournay, a pension of greater value; and by professing to consult him on all the most important affairs, flattered at once his cupidity and his vanity.

A year or two followed marked by no important events, till, at the beginning of 1519, Maximilian died, and Francis and Charles at once declared themselves competitors for the imperial crown. Henry was also tempted to offer himself as a candidate, but finding that he was too late in the field, he withdrew, and comforted

A.D. 1519.

himself with the idea that he held the balance between the rivals, and that his influence would decide the contest. That influence was at last exerted in favour of Charles, who was elected emperor; and to appease the resentment of Francis, Henry agreed to cross the Channel in order to have a personal interview with him on the borders of the French and English dominions. Even after he had given this promise he tried by every sort of idle excuse to evade the performance of it, till Francis got rid of his excuses by referring everything to the decision of Wolsey, who fixed May, in the ensuing year, as the time, and a spot near Guisnes as the place where the monarchs should meet. Then Henry professed the greatest eagerness for the interview, and swore that he would never more cut his beard till it had taken place. Francis bound himself by a similar oath. But when beards, in consequence, became the French fashion, it was found that they had not become an English one, for that Henry had broken the oath which his ally had kept so religiously, and his ambassador was forced to apologize for his perjury, on the ground that queen Catharine declined to kiss her husband unless he shaved himself in his usual manner.

The emperor had done his utmost to prevent the meeting between Henry and Francis; but, finding that beyond his power, he resolved to anticipate it; and the plan which he proposed suited Wolsey so well that it was adopted. Wolsey was anxious to see Francis that he might engage him to support his pretensions to the papacy at the next vacancy; and it was apparent that the support of Charles, as king of Spain and emperor, would be still more important. Accordingly, four or five days before Henry was to sail for Calais, Charles arrived at Dover without any state, professing that as he was passing the English coast, on his way from Spain to Flanders, it occurred to him to pay a visit of affection to his aunt, the queen; and, after four days spent with the court at Canterbury, he departed, having won the king's friendship by the frank confidence shown in his visit, and the cardinal's good will by the vast presents and promises which he had made him.

The next week the meeting between Henry and Francis took place, and presented the most gorgeous spectacle that had ever been seen in Europe. Francis would have been contented with a less costly parade, which would have better suited the finances of his kingdom, exhausted by its Italian campaigns; but finding that Wolsey, to whom the chief management on both sides was committed, was resolved on display, he submitted with a good grace, and vied with the English monarch in the numbers and splendour of his retinue. The nobles on each side exhibited the same emulation, and many of them, wearing, as one of the chroniclers of the

day expresses it, their mills, their forests, and their meadows on their backs, impoverished themselves for years by the expenses which they now incurred. The very tents were made of cloth of gold, and were filled within with the most gaudy and costly furniture; and, from the dazzling appearance of the whole, the meeting received the name of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," by which it is still generally known. The two kings met on horseback in the middle of the plain, and then retired to a tent prepared for them to discuss the matters of state which had been the ostensible object of their interview. But these soon gave way to festivity and revelry. The two kings, with fourteen chosen knights on their side, held a tournament, in which they kept the field against all comers; and they themselves, being both pre-eminent for strength and skill, gained the chief renown, defeating every one who ventured to cross lances with them. The queens beheld the combats from galleries erected for the purpose, and the evenings were spent in the most superb banquets and every kind of festivity. At the first meeting of the kings, Henry had shown a delicate courtesy to Francis, in omitting from the heading of the treaty which was proposed the title of of King of France, which had been assumed by the English sovereigns ever since the time of Henry V.; but still every subsequent interview was regulated by the most jealous suspicion, and every precaution was taken to prevent any treachery which either of them might meditate against his ally, till Francis broke through the odious ceremonial by which they were both surrounded by riding into the English camp attended by only two esquires and a page. Henry met him with equal cordiality; they exchanged gifts of immense value, and from that moment confidence was established between them.

Francis, however, was greatly disappointed when he found that, on quitting Guisnes, Henry went to Gravelines to return the emperor's visit, and that Charles accompanied him back to Calais, where he spent four more days in close conferences with him and the cardinal.

CHAPTER XXVII

HENRY VIII. (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1521.

THE beginning of the next year was stained with the blood of the greatest nobleman in England. The duke of Buckingham was descended from the youngest son of Edward III., and was the nearest heir to the crown if the king should die without issue. He had been incautious enough to speculate upon and to speak openly of the possibility of his succession, and had even consulted a Carthusian friar, named Hopkins, who had a considerable reputation as an astrologer, on the subject. It was still more unfortunate for him that he had given mortal offence to Wolsey by satirical comments on the wasteful profusion of the late visit to France, on the success of which the cardinal especially prided himself. He was brought to trial on the charge of having imagined the king's death, and executed on Tower Hill, to the great grief of the people, by whom he was greatly beloved, and who saw with great indignation almost the last of the Plantagenets sacrificed, as they conceived, to the arrogance of one who, sprung from their own class, provoked their envy by his unparalleled ostentation.

For Wolsey certainly did not bear his honours meekly; no monarch had ever equalled the pomp with which he daily traversed the streets on a mule caparisoned with scarlet velvet, and gilt stirrups, preceded by a long array of maces and other ensigns, from his palace at Whitehall to the Court of Chancery. At the same time it must be recorded to his honour, that his conduct as a judge was unimpeachable, his diligence and despatch great, his ability conspicuous, his decisions invariably just and impartial. Nor was this his only claim to praise; his patronage of merit was discerning and constant, and his zeal for the promotion of education was evidenced by his foundation of noble colleges at Ipswich and Oxford; one of which remains, to this day, one of the most splendid academical institutions of the kingdom.

In the mean time an event had taken place in Germany which soon made itself felt in every quarter of the civilized world. The Reformation had broken out. In that country disaffection to the Romish authority had been steadily on the increase ever since the execution of Huss; the introduction of printing had stimulated

and facilitated inquiry into the truth, so that the state of the people was gradually becoming more and more ripe for a change; and nothing was wanting but some impulse sufficient to set in motion minds that had long been prepared for it. That impulse was now supplied by the rapacity of the pope, who, desirous to recruit his exhausted treasury, commissioned the archbishop of Magdeburg, to raise him a sum of money by the sale of indulgences throughout Germany. The archbishop employed Tetzl, a Dominican friar, as his agent, who executed his charge with the most shameless contempt of all decency, till his extravagance raised the opposition of Martin Luther, an Augustine monk, a man of great learning, and of an inquiring spirit, whose studies had already led him to doubt the agreement of many of the practices of the see of Rome with the Scripture, from which alone they could derive their authority. It would exceed the limits of a work like this, nor does it belong to a history of England, to detail the steps by which he gradually proceeded from his objections to one action to a complete denial of the authority of the pope. It is sufficient to say here, that Leo, who at first looked upon his arguments with contempt and even with amusement, perceived, at last, that his whole power was seriously menaced, and issued a formal condemnation of Luther's writings. In accordance with the papal sentence, Wolsey, as legate, in May, 1521, went in a solemn procession to St. Paul's, where, after a sermon on Luther's errors had been addressed to the multitude by the bishop of Rochester, his writings were burnt by the common executioner. Henry himself, whose early studies had been chiefly of a theological character, shared his minister's indignation at the presumptuous reformer, and undertook to write a book in refutation of his errors. It was in vain that one of the wisest of his councillors, More, warned him of the impolicy of thus binding himself, before the eyes of the world, to a perpetual adherence to the doctrines of a potentate with whom, at a future time, he might be less inclined to be friendly. The influence of Wolsey, who desired to see him pledge himself publicly and irrevocably to the maintenance of the existing forms, prevailed, and the book was published and presented to the pope, who gratified the royal author with the highest praise of his performance, and with the title of Defender of the Faith, which succeeding popes would soon have been glad to recall, but which still remains, though not in the sense in which it was conferred, a well-merited title of the sovereign of Great Britain.

At the end of the year Leo died, and Wolsey, confiding in the promises of support which he had received from Charles and from Francis, entertained sanguine hopes of succeeding him; but a Fleming, who had formerly been the emperor's tutor, was chosen,

A.D. 1521.

and Wolsey, considering that his election must have been owing to Charles's influence, and that he himself, therefore, had been mocked by promises which were never intended to be performed, conceived, from this time forth, a settled enmity to that prince, though he, for a time, dissembled his feelings, in the hope, as the new pope was old, that he might perhaps obtain his support in the event of a fresh vacancy.

In fact he had so entangled Henry in the mazes of the emperor's ambitious and crooked policy, that he could not at once draw back. Charles had shown every desire to pick a quarrel with Francis on very trivial pretences, and, when he afterwards offered to submit the matters in dispute to arbitration, Francis, who, on the first appearance of hostilities, had collected a powerful army, and thought that he saw a favourable opportunity of driving the Spaniards out of Navarre, which Ferdinand had conquered at the beginning of Henry's reign, at first declined his proposal, but after a time accepted it. Wolsey, by the consent of both parties, was chosen umpire between them, and, in August, 1521, went to Calais to preside over a conference, which they professed to hope might lead to the re-establishment of peace. The demands of the imperial ambassadors, however, were so unreasonable, that that hope was disappointed, though Francis suspected, as he had ample reason, the good faith of the cardinal, and apprehended that, in the war which he saw impending, he should find the English arrayed on the side of Charles. Wolsey did not long preserve the least appearance of impartiality; but, even during the conference, went to Bruges to pay a visit to the emperor, who received him with as much state as if he had been a king; and a secret compact was made that Henry should break an agreement, which he had previously made with Francis, to give his daughter Mary to the dauphin, should bestow her on Charles, and should also the next year join him in the war against France with 40,000 men. Wolsey even contemplated adding a military office to his other appointments, and commanding a portion of the English force himself; but Henry's evident disapproval caused him to abandon that design.

Having thus committed the king to a close alliance with the emperor, he could not retreat at once; and in the hope of removing the irritation which there could be no doubt of his feeling at the disappointment of his views, Charles the next year paid another visit to England, in which he sought, by fresh promises and magnificent presents, to recover his confidence, and succeeded so far that, immediately on his departure, Henry declared war against France, and sent lord Surrey, with a considerable force, to invade Normandy; but the skill of the duke de Vendôme, who was opposed to him, prevented his obtaining any important success, and

an unusually wet season spread disease among his men, so that the campaign produced neither honour nor advantage.

Henry proposed to efface the recollection of his failure on this occasion by an expedition on a larger scale, and to do this he required money. The annual payments which Francis had agreed to make him were of course terminated by the war. The vast treasures left by his father, though amounting to nearly two millions of money, had long since been dissipated, and he was forced to apply to his people. He first, by his own authority, compelled the city of London to furnish him with a large sum under the name of a loan; and, as this was wholly insufficient, he summoned a parliament, the first for several years, and demanded no less than 800,000*l.*, to be raised by a tax of twenty per cent. upon all property of every kind, while a still heavier contribution was required from the clergy. Such a demand was so unprecedented and intolerable that the house of commons, though it had lost much of its old spirit of independence, showed signs of resistance. Wolsey came down to the house himself in the hope of intimidating the members; but by the advice of More, the speaker, he was received with profound silence, and, when he expostulated, was distinctly told that the members were only used to debate among themselves, and that they would not discuss the matter with him. He was forced to retire unsatisfied. At last they voted a sum amounting to about half what had been demanded, payable by instalments in four years. Wolsey exacted it in one, and resolved to rule for the future without the aid of so refractory a body. Seven years elapsed before another parliament was summoned, during which the cardinal levied money by the royal authority, extorted benevolences in spite of the statute of Richard III., sent commissioners through all the kingdom, who compelled men to give upon oath a statement of their property, and to contribute such a proportion of it as he saw fit, till he became universally detested as the subverter of the liberties of the people, whom he was trying, as it was said, to reduce to the state of the French, and serious insurrections broke out in more than one county.

The king had especial reason to wish for a full treasury at the commencement of the year 1523; for not only was there an apparent probability of a revival of the war with Scotland, where the duke of Albany, (who had been appointed regent during the minority of the new king,) prevented the renewal of the truce made after the battle of Flodden, procured the rejection of Henry's offer to marry his daughter Mary to his youthful sovereign, and marched to the borders with an army which the English generals in that district had no means of resisting, though his incapacity or timidity was such that he afterwards retreated without having seen

A.D. 1523.

an enemy, or performed a single military exploit ; but at the same time a prospect offered itself to Henry of making himself master of the greater part of the kingdom of France.

Francis had endeavoured to give him occupation in his own dominions by exciting the earl of Desmond to raise a rebellion in Ireland, and to set up the claims of Richard De la Pole, the last survivor of the house of York, to the throne ; and De la Pole, who had found safety in France ever since the execution of his kinsman the earl of Suffolk at the beginning of this reign, was prepared to invade England with a French force on the first favourable opportunity. But while the king of France was thus exciting Henry's subjects against him, he was in far greater peril himself from the disaffection of one of his own nobles.

The duke of Bourbon, constable of France, was not only nearly related to the royal family, and by far the richest and most powerful subject in the kingdom, but was also possessed of the very highest military reputation and ability. He had, however, offended the king's mother, Louisa of Savoy, a most licentious, revengeful, and rapacious woman, by rejecting her offer of marriage after the death of his wife ; and she determined to effect his ruin. She persuaded her son to deprive him of the command of the vanguard of the army, which belonged to his office as constable ; and to wrest from him some estates to which he had succeeded in right of his wife, a grand-daughter of Louis XI., on pretence that they had reverted to the crown ; she brought frivolous actions against him herself for others of his estates ; the chancellor Duprat and most of the judges were so profligate, and so wholly devoted to her interests, that there was little doubt that their decision would be in her favour ; and Bourbon felt assured that she would not rest till she had stripped him of everything, and reduced him to a state of degradation and beggary. He determined to counteract her schemes ; but even the affronts which he had received, and the dangers with which he was menaced, cannot excuse the measures which his resentment led him to adopt. The principle of loyalty to the sovereign had been too much undermined during the wars of the last century, and there had been too many instances of its having but a slight hold over the minds of the English and French nobles, to allow us to be much surprised at the injustice and ingratitude of Francis overpowering such a feeling in the breast of the haughty constable, who had often been heard to quote with approval the sentiment that the conduct to which no expectation of gain should tempt a man of honour, might be justified by the slightest affront, or at his thinking the king entitled to his duty and obedience only so long as his fortunes and honour were safe under the protection of the royal favour and justice. But his country was surely entitled to no such

conditional allegiance; and yet he now resolved to betray that country to its most persevering enemies, and to dismember it so completely as to prevent it from ever recovering its former independence. He opened negotiations with Henry and Charles, proposing that several large provinces in the south-east should be erected into a kingdom for himself; that Charles, besides recovering Burgundy, to which he had hereditary claims, should receive Picardy, Champagne, and the rich district of Languedoc; while Henry should be assisted in conquering the whole of the rest of the country, and should be acknowledged as king of France; and he offered either to seize Francis on one of his journeys, or, if disappointed in that attempt, to cut off his return from the invasion of Italy, for which he was preparing, while his confederates took advantage of the king's absence to overrun the whole country, which that absence would have left defenceless. His plot was well laid; and it was only in consequence of accidental delays, which prevented Francis from joining his army in Lombardy as soon as he had intended, that he received intelligence of it while still in France, and that it failed of at least a temporary success; but Bourbon, finding the king's suspicions awakened, fled; his flight interrupted his communication with his allies at the most critical moment, and, before a fresh plan of operations could be constructed, events had happened which made Wolsey less inclined to aid in depressing Francis, or in raising the emperor at his expense.

Pope Adrian died in September, the week after Bourbon had made his escape, and Wolsey was doomed again to experience the disappointment of his hopes, and to see the elevation of Giulio de Medici, who took the name of Clement VII., and whose vigorous age and health deprived him of any reasonable expectation of another vacancy of the holy see, while he should be in a condition to profit by it. It is quite as probable that his defeat was owing to the hostility of the cardinals in the French interest, as to the insincerity of Charles; but Wolsey attributed it wholly to the latter cause, and became in consequence fully resolved to break off the connexion between that prince and his own sovereign; and Henry was the more inclined to fall in with his views, from being disgusted at another ineffectual campaign made by his brother-in-law, the duke of Suffolk, in the north of France, who, though he overran the whole country almost as far as Paris, was unable to bring the French marshal, De la Tremouille, to a decisive action, and was forced, as Surrey had been the preceding year, to return ingloriously to Calais at the approach of winter.

Bourbon, ignorant of the cardinal's change of purpose, and still clinging to his projects of revenge, renewed his proposals to Henry and Charles at the beginning of the next year, and with

A.D. 1525.

the aid of some Spanish troops laid siege to Marseilles, expecting to receive a supply of money from England, and also to be assisted by an English invasion of Normandy; but the imperial generals were too jealous of him to co-operate with him cordially, and Wolsey prevented the money from reaching him, and any diversion from being made in his favour in the north; so that his attempt upon that city failed, and he had to seek in another quarter that revenge which his talents soon rendered complete. It does not belong to this history to relate the events of the campaign which ensued; it is sufficient to say, that at the beginning of the next year Bourbon, at the head of the emperor's army, totally defeated the French under the walls of Pavia, and Francis himself became a prisoner.

On the first news of this triumph of his ally, Henry put on the appearance of great joy, and caused a public thanksgiving to be offered up in St. Paul's as if for a national victory; but in secret he began to negotiate with the captive monarch, who saw in an alliance with him the best prospect of speedily obtaining his liberty. Large arrears, on account of previous compacts, were due to England, which Francis agreed to pay, with considerable additions, and he completely won over Wolsey by the promise of proportionally large presents to himself. Henry, in return, promised to use his good offices with the emperor to obtain the release of Francis, and employed them so energetically, that when it was granted, Francis wrote to him, acknowledging that he owed his freedom to his exertions. The ties which previously existed between Henry and the emperor were gradually loosened by the marriage of the latter to the princess of Portugal, instead of to Henry's daughter Mary, to whom he had been contracted, but who was still only a child; and before the end of the year peace between England and France was formally proclaimed in London: one of the conditions of which bound Henry to use his influence with Charles to obtain, on certain specified conditions, the liberation of Francis's sons, who had been surrendered as security for his ransom, and pledged him, if he failed in that object, to make war upon Charles in concert with Francis.

The rupture with the emperor was now complete, though the two courts still preserved the outward appearance of civility to each other; and Henry's jealousy of Charles's power was further increased by the events of the spring of 1527, when the imperial armies stormed Rome and took the pope himself prisoner. He now desired to change his defensive alliance with Francis into an offensive one, with the express object of curbing the further progress of the emperor's ambition; and Wolsey went to France to conduct the negotiation. Francis received him, as Charles had formerly

done, with the honours due to a crowned head ; came to Amiens to meet him, and allowed him to dictate the terms of the alliance almost entirely according to his own pleasure.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HENRY VIII. (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1527.
1528.



OLSEY had now reached the height of his grandeur; but circumstances were already in operation which were about to produce his fall.

It has been mentioned that when the marriage between the king and his brother's widow was proposed, doubts were raised with respect to the lawfulness of such a connexion ; but the question was carefully considered, those doubts were overruled, and the marriage was solemnized with the approbation of the council of the kingdom, and of the pope, who was then considered the infallible judge in such matters, and who granted a dispensation to permit it. It had subsisted seventeen years, Catharine had borne Henry several children, of whom however only one, the princess Mary, was alive ; when he, in search of a new mistress, became acquainted with Anne Boleyn, daughter of sir Thomas Boleyn, and grand-daughter of the duke of Norfolk. Her virtue, proof against the solicitations to which so many had yielded, only inflamed his desires, and made him eager for a more permanent connexion ; and he saw no means of effecting this but in reviving the question about the lawfulness of his marriage with the queen.

Besides his marriage with Catharine there was another obstacle to his marriage with Anne, in the fact that she had been already contracted to lord Percy ; and in those days a precontract, if not formally annulled, was held of as much validity as an actual marriage to prevent an union with any other person : but, at Henry's request, Wolsey, by his authority as legate of the pope, pronounced a judicial dissolution of this obligation ; though his intention in so doing was only to facilitate her becoming the royal mistress, a step which his priestly character did not, in his opinion, prevent him from sanctioning. He was equally ready to aid his master in procuring a divorce from Catharine, chiefly perhaps because no greater affront could be put upon the emperor, her nephew ; but, when he found that Anne was to be put in her place, he op-

A.D. 1527.

posed such a measure with great energy, representing a knight's daughter as wholly beneath him, till he found the king's purpose too firmly fixed to be shaken by his arguments or entreaties; when he withdrew his opposition, and endeavoured to efface all recollection of it by his subsequent complaisance. But Anne and her family had learnt to look upon him as their enemy, and, distrusting the sincerity of his reconciliation to them, laboured incessantly to effect his ruin.

Having procured the opinions of most of his prelates that his union with Catharine was intrinsically unlawful, as being prohibited by Scripture, Henry now made formal application to the pope for a divorce; or, to speak more correctly, for a sentence pronouncing his marriage invalid; and his application placed Clement in a situation of great embarrassment. He was at this time a prisoner in the hands of the emperor, who was not likely to submit patiently to the infliction of such an injury upon his aunt. On the other hand, his best hopes of procuring his liberation lay in the exertions which Henry might be inclined to make in his favour; and, though in December he effected his escape from confinement, yet, as his territories were still occupied by the imperial troops, he was not much relieved from the necessity of avoiding to offend their master. He would gladly have found some middle way of pleasing, or at least satisfying both king and emperor, and did not absolutely reject a proposal made by Henry to grant him such a dispensation as should allow him to have two wives at the same time, and should legitimatise the offspring of both. But Catharine would have looked upon such an arrangement as an insult more intolerable than even divorce;* and at last he was prevailed upon to sign two deeds, one authorizing Wolsey, as his legate, to decide upon the legality of the marriage, and the other permitting the king, in the event of its dissolution, to marry any person whatever, whom he might choose, even though she might be precontracted to another. But he requested urgently that no public use should be made of these instruments till the imperial troops were removed from his territories. Wolsey, however, fancied that some alterations, which had been made at Rome in the wording of these instruments, indicated an intention, on the part of Clement, to have recourse to some evasion to neutralize their effect, and sent an envoy, Stephen Gardiner, who afterwards rose to great eminence and influence, to procure a third deed, binding the pope to ratify whatever decision he should pronounce. Gardiner, a man of consummate ability and resolution, though at a later period he professed the most ardent zeal for the pope, was at present far more

* Former popes had afforded precedents for such indulgence. In the preceding generation, Pius II. had given such a license to Henry IV. of Castile.

solicitous to study the wishes of those on whom his preferment depended, and had but little pity for Clement's perplexities, threatening him that, if the matter were not done with him, it would be done without him, and extorting his consent to the demands of which he was the bearer, by the fear that his refusal might lose him the whole of his authority in the kingdom. It was manifest that a very slight provocation would be likely to have this effect; for the authority of the see of Rome over the minds, not only of the people in general, but even of the clergy also, had long been diminishing: and, of course, the events of the last few years, during which the papal doctrines had been openly denounced, Rome had been sacked, and the pope himself had been taken prisoner and kept in confinement, were not likely to have rendered that authority more feared or more respected. Clement had no alternative but to acquiesce, outwardly at least, in Henry's wishes; and in order to give the decision which was anticipated a greater appearance of impartiality than it could have had if it had been pronounced by Wolsey alone, another cardinal, Campeggio, was with his consent sent as his colleague, and it was believed that his subservience was secured by the gift of the bishopric of Salisbury and by hopes held out to him of further preferment in England, though it was afterwards found that he had secret instructions to interpose every possible delay to the prosecution of the affair, and to avoid pronouncing any definite decision till the question had been submitted, in all its completeness, to the pope himself.

It was in April that their commission was signed, but it was October before Campeggio arrived in England, and in the mean time events had nearly happened which would have rendered Henry indifferent to its progress; for Anne fell ill of a singular complaint, called the sweating sickness, which was very fatal in England in that age, and nearly became a victim to its violence. She, however, recovered, but the whole winter was suffered to elapse without any steps being taken; and it was not till May, 1529, that the two cardinals opened their court; the king and queen both appeared before them, and Catharine, inspired with an unwonted energy and eloquence by the strangeness and cruelty of her situation, in a touching speech to her heartless husband, appealed to his bygone affection, to his honour, and to his truth to do her justice, and refused to submit to judges whose minds were made up before investigation, and who were wholly dependent on her interested enemies.

In less than a month from that time the imperial generals in Italy gained a victory* over the French that placed the whole of that country at their feet, and made it impossible for Clement to

* The great battle of Landriano, gained by Antonio de Leyva.

A.D. 1529.

offend the emperor without the most extreme danger ; in fact, on the very day that this victory was gained, and before it was known to either party, he had signed a treaty of alliance with the emperor ; and being now completely gained over to his views, on the 18th of July he revoked his permission to the legates to decide the question, and reserved it for his own tribunal at Rome.

Wolsey had no share in this proceeding, and indeed was indignant at it, but it proved his ruin. Anne, who recollected his original opposition to her marriage, looked upon him as the secret cause of the delay, and used all her influence to remove him from the king's councils ; pointing out to Henry the general dislike with which he was regarded, and the discontent which his arbitrary measures and illegal extortions had excited among the people, till at last Henry promised that he would never see him again.

A few days afterwards, on the 17th of October, Wolsey was deprived of the great seal ; and the attorney-general, by the king's directions, laid an information against him for having transgressed the law, by introducing bulls from Rome into the kingdom. Those very bulls had been procured, not only with the king's consent, but at his solicitation ; but the cardinal's courage deserted him the moment that he found he had lost the royal favour ; he threw himself on the king's mercy, surrendered all his property to him, including his town palace, York Place, (which, under the name of Whitehall, became the chief residence of the sovereign, till it was destroyed by fire at the end of the next century,) and retired to Esher, to await his further pleasure. Once or twice Henry relented for a moment, sent him kind messages, and condescended to accept his fool Patch as a friendly present ; but the hopes thus rekindled in his bosom soon passed away. When parliament met, a committee was appointed, which drew up a long and frivolous indictment against him ; but the charges contained in it, though unanimously agreed to by the house of lords, were rejected by the commons, owing to the exertions of Thomas Cromwell, who afterwards became Henry's chosen minister ; and who, having been originally raised from a low station by the cardinal's bounty, now with a virtue very rare in that age, showed that he did not forget his obligations to his patron.

Wolsey had now a short respite, and was allowed to retire to his diocese of York, which he had never visited all the time that he had been archbishop. He recovered his spirits in some degree, and, being somewhat humbled by his recent mortifications, he behaved with great courtesy and affability to all classes, winning golden opinions from all men by the judicious energy with which he began to administer the affairs of his see. But the news of his popularity reached the court, and only increased the industry of his enemies

who, by reports well calculated enough to work upon the jealous temper of the king, but probably wholly destitute of foundation, induced Henry to believe that he had been guilty of secret dealings with the ministers of the pope and of the king of France, and to sign a warrant to seize him on a charge of high treason.

He was preparing for his installation as archbishop on a scale of great magnificence, when the earl of Northumberland arrived at York, on the 4th of November, and arrested him by the king's order, and the next day, those who had charge of him began to remove him towards London; but his strength had wholly given way under this last blow, and he became so ill that he could only travel very slowly. On the 26th of November he arrived at Leicester Abbey, and was unable to proceed farther; on the 29th he died; with his last breath recommending himself to Henry's kindly recollection, and giving his hearers the well-known warning which has probably often been taken for the invention of the poet, but which was, in reality, the genuine expression of the dying prelate, prompted by the bitterness of his past experience and of his present feelings,—

“ Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my king, He would not in my age
Have left me naked to my enemies.”

In his career he had displayed the most eminent abilities, and many noble qualities, sullied in some degree by failings even more conspicuous. He had been an energetic, a sagacious and often a successful statesman; an able and incorruptible judge; a munificent patron of learned men, and of merit of every kind; a zealous promoter of education; a humane ruler, able to incline even the cruel temper of his master to mercy. On the other hand, he was proud, even beyond the ordinary degree of human arrogance: his unparalleled elevation had turned his head, and he expected that it should have the same effect on the rest of the world; he was insatiably ambitious, and regulated many of the affairs of the kingdom solely with a view to further his own objects, or to revenge himself on those whom he suspected of having thwarted them. What is even a more serious charge against him as an English minister is that he endeavoured to subvert the liberties of his country, and to make Henry an absolute king by teaching him to govern without parliaments, and to violate the Great Charter in its most essential article, by imposing taxes on his subjects to which they had not consented. This last fault we may allow to be in some degree palliated by the consideration that it was not without precedent in other reigns, though no other king had persevered in so long a course of tyranny as to keep the nation seven years

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without a parliament. His other errors we may look upon with indulgence, in consideration of the infirmities of our common nature, which has rarely been so severely tried by such unexampled and unqualified prosperity; and we must admit that they were far outweighed by his virtues and by the good use which he in general made of his power.

In the mean time Henry had taken other steps to procure his separation from the queen. In the autumn of 1529, being on a journey, he slept one night at Waltham Cross, and Gardiner, who had now become secretary of state, and Fox, the king's almoner, were lodged in the house of a Mr. Cressy, who on the same evening entertained as his guest a relation of his wife's, who was already eminent as one of the most learned scholars in the university of Cambridge, Thomas Cranmer. The conversation turned upon the engrossing topic of the day, the lawfulness of the king's marriage, and Cranmer gave his opinion that it was not a question that ought to be decided judicially by the pope's court, but simply by the Scriptures; for that the pope had no authority to give a decision contrary to the Word of God; and that the readiest and surest way to ascertain the sense of the Scriptures was to consult the different universities of Europe on the subject. The conversation was reported to Henry, who sent for Cranmer, and embracing his suggestion, despatched him with other envoys to the most celebrated universities in every country to collect their opinions. A very large majority agreed that his union with his brother's widow, if the previous marriage had been fully consummated, was repugnant to the Word of God. And, though it is doubtful whether that was the fact, Henry assumed that their judgment authorized the proceedings which in any case he had resolved to adopt; and, having procured a more express decision to the same effect from the convocations of Canterbury and York, he resolved not to wait for the formal abrogation of his previous marriage; and in January, 1533,* he was privately married to Anne Boleyn, whom he had previously created marchioness of Pembroke.

Before this event Warham, the primate, died; and Henry resolved to appoint Cranmer to the office, who with the most sincere humility sought to avoid the honour, and even protracted his stay in foreign countries, in the hope that the king might be led to fix on some one more willing to undertake it. But Henry, never willing to be thwarted, overcame his reluctance; in the March after the marriage he was consecrated at Lambeth; and, with as little delay

* Hume, following Burnet, places her marriage (a private one) November 14, 1532. A letter of Cranmer, enrolled by S. Turner, fixes it "about St. Paul's day," i.e., January 23, 1533. Turner adding that there was a subsequent and public marriage, April 25, 1533. Dean Hook ignores the private marriage altogether, and, giving no authority, gives the date May, 25, 1533. Mr. Froude follows Turner. It is certain that Elizabeth was born September 7, 1533.

as possible after this ceremony, as judge of the ecclesiastical court, he pronounced that the king's marriage with Catharine had been from the beginning invalid, as being opposed to the law of God, and that Anne was his only lawful wife.

The years which had elapsed since the death of Wolsey had not passed without some acts on the part of the king not a little significant of his future course. One of the charges which he had prompted against the cardinal was that he had, in obedience to the papal bull, established a court of justice as legate; and he now caused the whole body of the clergy to be impeached as Wolsey's accomplices for having submitted to the authority so exercised, and compelled them to pay as a fine the enormous contribution of nearly 120,000*l.* and also to own him as "the protector and supreme head of the Church and clergy of England, in so far as is permitted by the law of Christ." By the first clause of this sentence threatening the pope with a renunciation of his allegiance, if he did not show himself more compliant; and by the second leaving the door still open for a reconciliation with him, if he would be induced to gratify him in the matter which he had at heart.

But though he had not yet made up his mind positively to break with him, he proceeded by acts of one unvaried tenor to abridge his power in the kingdom, and to extend his own, causing the parliament, now summoned for the first time for several years, to deprive the pope of the first-fruits of bishoprics, to diminish the tax which he had hitherto exacted on granting investiture to new prelates, and prohibiting all people from paying the slightest regard to any censures which he might fulminate against those who should pay obedience to these acts; in short, so unmistakable was the object of all the legislation of this period, that sir Thomas More, who had succeeded Wolsey as chancellor, and was unshaken in his obedience to the papal authority, resigned the seals, because he saw that it would be impossible for him in that situation to reconcile his reverence to the pope with his allegiance to his sovereign.

At the same time Henry began to strengthen himself on the Continent in the event of his deciding on a rupture with Rome. He sent a large sum to the princes, who had formed the league of Smalcalde, to uphold the Reformation in Germany; and he invited Francis to another conference, in which he hoped to persuade that monarch to join him in renouncing his obedience to the pope, if he himself should decide on such a step. They met at Calais in October, 1532; and from thence he proceeded to Boulogne, to return the visit of Francis in his own territories. The French king had no more religion than the English one; but still, as he hoped at a future day to recover his footing in Italy, he would not promise to break with the pope; though, fearing above all things a reconciliation

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between Henry and the emperor, he was very willing to see the former embroil himself with both pope and emperor beyond the possibility of retreat, and strongly urged him to marry Anne, without waiting for the sanction of the holy see.

The tenor of all Henry's measures, and the general result of his interview with Francis, could hardly have been a secret to Clement; but that pontiff was a weak and timid man, whose fears sometimes droye him into hastiness of action, but prevented his ever acting with the firmness which alone can command respect. And now trusting to at least a negative support from Francis, with whose bad faith and disregard of all engagements he was well acquainted, but of whose friendship he thought himself secured by the marriage lately negotiated between his niece, Catharine de Medici, and the king's son, the duke of Orleans, afterwards Henry II., he threw down the gauntlet of defiance to Henry by issuing a bull, annulling the judgment pronounced by Cranmer on the validity of Henry's first marriage, and threatening him with excommunication, if he did not discard Anne, and restore Catharine to her matrimonial rights.

An act of more reckless folly towards a prince of Henry's character can hardly be imagined. It was well known that, if it was difficult to lead, it was impossible to drive him; and to drive him back from a path on which he had advanced so far, was clearly in the highest degree impracticable. He was rendered furious by Clement's menace; and the minister whom he now trusted most was well inclined to take advantage of such a disposition. Cromwell was a warm partisan of the doctrines which Luther had taught in Germany, and had already urged Henry to follow the example of the German princes, and to throw off the yoke of Rome; and though the king had for a while hesitated, he had lent a not unwilling ear to a project which promised to gratify his rapacity, as well as his love of arbitrary power; for it was plain that if popery were abolished, the papal establishments, the abodes of monks, and friars, and nuns, would fall with it; and the superstition of past ages had endowed them generally with such vast riches, that they offered a tempting prey to the spoiler. In many, though far from all such houses, the grossest licentiousness had prevailed. The scandalous tales concerning them had been carefully propagated, and no doubt greatly exaggerated by their enemies, till the common belief was that they were all alike hot-beds of profligacy and debauchery; and a general feeling was thus raised against them, which rendered their suppression an easy and a popular undertaking.

Besides being held up as objects of public hatred for their dissoluteness, the friars were exposed to public ridicule for their impostures. In one place a phial, which they declared to contain

some drops of the genuine blood of our Saviour, was proved to contain nothing but the blood of a duck. A miraculous crucifix, the figure on which nodded its head, and by the movements of its lips appeared to express its approbation whenever offerings of sufficient value were made at its shrine, was broken to pieces at Paul's Cross, and the springs by which it was worked were exposed to the populace, whose indignation corresponded to their past credulity, and who eagerly approved of any vengeance that could be taken on those who had so long deluded them.

The detection of these and similar frauds rapidly put an end to the worship of the saints and of the Virgin, which had been chiefly founded on them; but there was one, who, as being a popish rather than a Christian saint, had been the most especial object of the monks' devotion, and the favourite subject of their exhortations to the people, Thomas à Becket; and the adoration paid to his shrine at Canterbury had completely effaced the worship of God Himself in that city. The offerings made in a year at the altar of St. Thomas, as he was called, were sometimes three or four hundred times greater than those presented to God and to the Virgin put together. The impiety was monstrous; but there was something ridiculous in the steps taken to stop it; for Henry not only pillaged his shrine, the riches of which were sufficient to tempt even a less watchful rapacity, but caused the deceased prelate to be summoned to appear in a court of justice, to answer an impeachment for treason. On his non-appearance he was found guilty, and condemned; his tomb was rifled, his bones burned, the ashes scattered in the air, and his name was formally struck out of the calendar.

The minds of the people were thus well prepared for any measures calculated to put a stop to courses so demoralizing and degrading; and they had not long to wait. In the autumn the parliament met, and at once passed an act, abolishing for ever the authority of the pope within the kingdom, and establishing the supremacy of the king over the Church, and over all ecclesiastical bodies. And it is remarkable that the form, which this and other acts now passed assumed, was not that of enacting laws, of laws establishing a new order of things; but that of declaratory laws, as reasserting and explaining what had always been the rule of the English constitution. They declared that former kings, among whom not only the great Edwards, the first and third of their name, but even so weak a prince as Richard II., and one to whom, by reason of his disputable title, caution was so necessary as Henry IV. had constantly made ordinances and provisions to secure the kingdom from the encroachments of the papacy. And this declaration was in strict harmony with the notorious facts of our history. Another act declared the original invalidity of the king's marriage

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with Catharine, ratified that with Anne, and settled the succession of the kingdom on her children. A short time afterwards, as it seemed requisite to erect an office for the management of ecclesiastical affairs, Cromwell was made vicar-general, with precedence over every subject in the kingdom, and the right of presiding in convocation as superior to the archbishop even in that assembly. Another statute, confessedly a novelty, but manifestly suggested by the recent transactions, prohibited all appeals to Rome in any description of cause; thus depriving the pope of a privilege which had been frequently used as an engine for the acquisition of power, and always as one for the replenishment of the papal treasury. Another act gave the king the property of all the smaller monastic establishments. Those which possessed larger endowments soon shared the same fate; and a commission was appointed to travel through the kingdom, and to investigate the manner in which their members had discharged the trust committed to them. Some had been so blameless, some so actively useful and praiseworthy, that even from commissioners interested to report unfavourably of them they extorted praise, but it could avail them nothing before a judge determined to condemn them. Several hundred monasteries, abbeys, and nunneries were suppressed, and their property confiscated. Small pensions were given to the expelled members; and the bishoprics of Westminster, Oxford, Gloucester, Bristol, Peterborough, and Chester were erected and endowed with a portion of their spoils. The rest of their estates were either appropriated by the sovereign himself, or distributed by him among his favourites, or sold at a low rate to the nobles and leading gentry of the different counties, who thus became pledged by their personal interest to the support of the new establishment by which they were so largely benefited. This seizure of ecclesiastical property was chiefly Cromwell's work, and few profited by it more than himself; but the blows which Cranmer aimed at the papal doctrines were prompted by a more disinterested zeal, and were more in accordance with his honest desire for the truth, and his pious and fervent spirit. When Henry first entered the lists against Luther, many of those who favoured the reformed doctrines, in a reasonable fear of persecution for their opinions, fled to Holland or Germany; and amongst them was a priest, named Tindal, a man of considerable learning, who soon afterwards printed at Antwerp a translation of the Bible, which was not however free from incorrectness. Warham, the primate, condemned it; but a number of the bishops, intending to second that condemnation in the most effectual manner, practically counteracted it. They bought up all the copies that could be found, and burnt them publicly; but the effect of this step was only to furnish Tindal with the means of publishing a new and

more correct edition, which, being now revised by Cranmer, received the royal sanction; and an order was issued that a copy of this Bible should be placed in every parish church throughout the kingdom, and that all persons should at all times have access to it.

But the Reformation was not destined to be free from the charge of blood. Intolerance was peculiarly the vice of the age. It infected equally the adherents of every sect, even those who in every other respect displayed the most charitable and amiable tempers, the most advanced and enlightened intellect. Men seem to have thought in those days that it would have been a proof that they themselves distrusted the soundness of the conclusions at which they had arrived, and of the doctrines which they professed, if they hesitated to enforce them unshrinkingly, and to visit with the most terrible punishments all who denied them. And the feeling was so universal that in more than one of the insurrections which took place during this and the following reign, one of the demands of the insurgents was that those of the opposite faith should "die like heretics by fire." Henry was as destitute of religion as a man of considerable ability and theological learning well can be; but the holiest priest had not more reverence for the will of God than he had for his own expressed opinions and asserted authority; and no scruples of mercy or humanity were likely to interfere with his enforcing compliance with them by the stern methods then in fashion. Accordingly, while still in agreement with the Church of Rome he had racked and burnt those who denied the pope's supremacy; now that he had renounced that, he proceeded to put to death those who denied his own; and, that all men might see that no merits on other grounds could atone for such an offence, the first persons whom he selected as objects of his vengeance were two of the most virtuous and illustrious of all his subjects.

Fisher, bishop of Rochester, had been one of the most trusted counsellors of Henry VII., and had long been greatly honoured by Henry himself, who had often boasted, with some truth, that no country could produce a more virtuous and learned prelate. Sir Thomas More had been Wolsey's successor as chancellor, with the unanimous approval of the whole kingdom, of the most learned men in Europe, and even of the fallen cardinal himself, who did himself honour by the frankness with which he admitted his competency for the office. He had also been, in an especial manner, the personal friend of his sovereign, who had often walked with him in his garden with his arm round his neck, while instructed and delighted with the playful wit for which he was almost as celebrated as for his other admirable virtues and talents. The virtues of these men were beyond all praise; their truth and loyalty beyond all suspicion: but they were firm in their attachment to the old religion,

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and could not bring themselves to take an oath admitting Henry's supremacy as head of the Church. Still no law had as yet made the refusal of this oath a capital offence. But they had also both expressed a doubt whether a woman, named Elizabeth Barton, was an impostor, who, professing to have received celestial visitations, had pronounced opinions that the marriage with Catharine was valid, and who, with some monks who had made a tool of her to support their own views, had been lately hanged for treason in speaking disrespectfully of the king. So besides the charge of refusing the oath of supremacy, a second was brought against them of having been accomplices of the Nun of Kent, as she had been called; and a further accusation was made against More, that he had induced the king to write his book against Luther, by which a weapon had been given to the pope against him, to his great dishonour throughout Christendom. The last two charges were as ridiculous as the first was illegal. But it may be feared that, as More himself thought, their real offence was, that they had refused to countenance the king's union with his present queen till the pope had annulled his previous marriage, and that they were sacrificed to the vindictive disposition of Anne. When they were brought to trial their conviction was sure. No jury could venture so to defy the crown as to acquit them; and, in the summer of 1535, they were beheaded, to the amazement and indignation of all Europe, the emperor Charles V. telling the English ambassador that, had he been Henry, he would rather have lost the best city in his dominions than so wise and honest a councillor as More.

If the queen was really the cause of the death of these innocent men, she soon, as More had prophesied, had cause to repent her sin in a similar fate. She had enemies in more than one quarter. Her elevation had in some degree turned her head; and offended some of the most powerful nobles, her own relations being among the number, by the haughtiness which she had displayed towards them. A still more numerous party flattered themselves that, if she were removed, Henry might be induced to return to the old religion, to which from considerations of piety and policy they were still attached. And both equally watched for any opportunity or pretext to alienate the king from her. In the September after her marriage she had borne the king a daughter, named Elizabeth, whom he, to mark his determination to exclude her sister Mary from the throne, had created princess of Wales, though she could only be his heiress in the event of his not having a son. Of a son he was eagerly desirous; and the queen was again in a state which afforded a prospect of the realization of his wishes, when she one day perceived Henry caressing one of her maids of honour. Her own experience told her that his fancy for another was the sure

forerunner of her own fall. Catharine had lately died, after suffering for several years the mortification of seeing another installed in her place; and Anne now anticipated a similar degradation. The agony of the thought brought on a premature labour. She presented the king with a dead son, and her ruin, if not determined on before, was fixed by that event; but even her utmost fears could never have divined the fate to which her inhuman husband had destined her.

In that age far less restraint was put upon the manners and conversation of both sexes than is usual now; and Anne had been brought up in France, where greater licence in these particulars was practised than was common in England. She was always light-hearted and merry, and, not being devoid of personal vanity, had allowed herself to betray gratification at the undisguised admiration of many of the courtiers, and even to make it the subject of her jests to themselves. On no more solid foundation, in the spring of 1536, Henry caused her, with four of the gentlemen of her suite, and her brother, lord Rochford, to be arrested; and accused them all, even her brother, of adultery with her. She was tried by a jury of peers. The evidence was ridiculous; but the peers proved as servile as the juries that had tried Fisher and More, and found her guilty of all the charges brought against her. To carry his malice still further, and to render her daughter illegitimate, the king then proceeded to have his marriage with her declared invalid from the beginning, on the ground that she had been precontracted to lord Percy. The fact was true, but it was equally true that the precontract had been formally annulled by Wolsey. It was equally clear that, if she had not been lawfully married to Henry, she could not have been guilty of adultery. But both considerations were made to yield to the cruel will of the king. Cranmer, whose only fault was a timorous nature which prevented his at all times adhering with firmness to what he knew to be right, was prevailed upon to pronounce her marriage null, as she, in the hopes of appeasing Henry, had consented to admit the precontract, and to be silent about its subsequent abrogation; and, having then carried both his objects, Henry signed the death-warrant of her who had for years lain in his bosom, been the object of his endearments, and what he called his affections. On the 19th of May, within three weeks of her first arrest, she was hurried to execution; and her inhuman husband showed the world what her real offence had been by marrying Jane Seymour the next morning.

In Ireland Henry's quarrel with the pope tended to compel him to a more vigorous mode of dealing with the state of affairs in that country. Hitherto the English Government had never been careful to maintain the authority of the crown in Ireland; nor had the

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nobles to whom estates had been granted, if really taking up their abode in Ireland, ever placed their safety or welfare in the maintenance of a dependence on England. They rather looked on their own kinsmen still remaining in England as foreigners, if not as enemies: and, identifying themselves with the native Irish, and seeking to induce the native Irish to recognise the identity, they desired to erect for themselves an authority virtually independent of any superior in either island. The consequence was that by this time, though in reality there were English, or rather as a general rule, Norman proprietors everywhere, what was called the English pale, the district in which alone the king's authority was really paramount, was limited to a small strip of land reaching along the sea coast from ten miles south of Dublin to fifty miles north of it. In every other part one chief or another, with an English title, set the English rule at defiance. One family of Geraldines, under the earl of Desmond, swayed the south and south west; another branch, under the earl of Kildare, occupied the centre. In the central district the Butlers, whose chief was the earl of Ormond, were all-powerful; the O'Neills were lords of the north: and the rivalry and animosities of these fierce and unruly chieftains kept the whole island in a constant state of disquietude, alarm and misery; with which, for a long time, the English government was too busy at home, or too careless to interfere. One step alone indicating the slightest prudence did the king take, when he sent lord Surrey, the ablest of all his subjects, as lord Deputy to quell the almost ceaseless insurrections; but he marred the effect of that wise action by denying the earl sufficient force to carry out his orders: Surrey resigned; and with incredible weakness Henry put himself and Ireland into the power of the earl of Kildare, the very head and chief of the disaffection: committing this folly in such a manner that it seemed almost as if he were terrified by his threats, and did not dare to put the law in force against him even when braved by him at the council board in London. It was not till after Kildare had been twice summoned to his presence and twice dismissed not only with honour but even with augmented authority, that on his third summons he was arrested and sent to the Tower: and so little was he dismayed by his arrest, that he instantly instructed his eldest son to rise in open revolt. His son lord Thomas Fitzgerald with incredible insolence entered the council room at St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin, and openly renounced his allegiance; and then, with an army which he had already equipped, attacked Dublin, seized the city, the garrison of which retreated into the Castle, kidnapped the Irish bishops, murdered them with his own hands, and even sent to Rome to request absolution for the murder, and countenance for his general design of expelling the English.

Had not the Ormonds, who were nearly always at feud with the Kildares, adhered to the crown, Ireland would, for the time at least, have been lost. Lord Thomas tried to conciliate them by holding out the prospect that union might enable the two houses to divide the whole island between them : Ormond, however, rejected his proffers ; and by a well planned incursion into Kildare (which drew off the bulk of the besiegers from Dublin,) compelled him to raise the siege : but lord Thomas was rather exasperated than daunted by the opposition of another Irishman. The new Deputy, Sir W. Skeffington, a veteran in whom age had greatly quenched the courage or at least the energy required for active war, was in England at the time. A force was furnished him sufficient to subdue the rebels, but he was so slack in crossing over that Fitzgerald, who had information of all his movements, was ready to receive him ; and inflicted a severe defeat on the first division which landed ; and encouraged by this success Fitzgerald now with treason more undisguised than ever opened a negociation not only with the pope, but with the emperor Charles V., to whom he offered allegiance and tribute. This was too much : at last the English government, who had hitherto regarded these transactions with strange apathy, roused themselves ; his father the earl was tried and attainted, though he died before his sentence could be executed, and in the spring of 1535, Skeffington was ordered to attack the Castle of Maynooth. It was reputed the strongest fortress in Ireland : but Skeffington was furnished with a battering train, almost the first, and far the strongest that had yet been seen in Europe. He soon breached the walls and stormed the castle, slaying sixty of the garrison. The rest were taken prisoners, and with the exception of ten or twelve were instantly hung : And the "pardon of Maynooth," as by somewhat of an Irish idiom this wholesale execution was named, crushed the rebellion. Lord Thomas fled into the mountainous districts hoping to escape to Spain ; but no vessel could be found ; and at last he surrendered with some of his uncles. The general to whom he submitted, lord Leonard Grey, was his uncle, and had given him hopes that an unconditional surrender might procure him mercy. But it was plain that if he were pardoned no subsequent rebellion could ever be with justice punished. He with the other prisoners was sent to England ; they were all hanged at Tyburn, and for a while Ireland enjoyed comparative tranquillity.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HENRY VIII. (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1536.
1539.

HENRY immediately after his marriage summoned a parliament, which was as complaisant as his former one had been, ratifying his divorce from Anne, and his marriage with his new queen, declaring the issue of both his previous marriages illegitimate, settling the throne on whatever children he might have hereafter, and, if he should have none, giving him the power of bequeathing the kingdom to any heir whom he might select. His object in procuring this power was supposed to be to make a natural son, whom he had created duke of Richmond, his successor; but the duke died soon afterwards, so that that intention, if it had ever existed, was frustrated.

In the mean time the Reformation which had taken place, however acceptable it was to those who could reason calmly on the monstrous impostures and pretensions of the Church of Rome to which it had put an end, had excited great discontent among more than one class of the population. Bad as many of the monasteries in some respects were, they had had redeeming qualities. They had been, in some degree, the refuge for the destitute of every class, the almshouses for the poor, the hospitals for the sick, the inns for the travellers; sometimes, though less frequently, the schools for the young. Above all they had afforded a provision for the younger branches of many a large or decayed family. As such, their demolition was severely felt. The destitute condition in which the expelled monks wandered over the land, by exciting compassion, increased the prevailing discontent, which was artfully stimulated by designing men, perhaps the emissaries of cardinal Pole, who, though allied by blood to the royal house, held his allegiance to the head of his Church dearer than that which he owed to the ruler of his country; and insurrections broke out in all the northern counties. One was really formidable, and especially memorable, from the numbers engaged, from the organisation it received from its leaders, (one of whom, lord Darcy, was of great military experience and high reputation,) from its duration, and from the terrible severity with which it was chastised. It was first set on foot at the beginning of October, 1536, by Robert Aske, a gentleman of fair estate, and of such force of character and general capacity that he rapidly gathered around him many of the most powerful nobles and knights

of the north; their fame and influence drew after them a large body of the commons, and before the end of the month they had made themselves masters of Pomfret, Hull, and of nearly the whole county of York. The duke of Norfolk, the conqueror of Flodden, was sent against them, but his numbers were far inferior to theirs, and he felt compelled in prudence to gain time by admitting a deputation from them to a conference that they might explain their grievances. Their representations, perhaps too the fantastic title of the Pilgrimage of Grace, which they themselves gave to their outbreak, showed how much of their discontent was due to the influence of the monks. They demanded, among other matters, a proscription of the new doctrines of Wiclif, Luther, and Melancthon, the re-establishment of the pope as the supreme head of the Church, the restoration of the abbeys and monasteries with all their estates, and the condign punishment of Cromwell and others of the king's servants, who "had maintained the false sects of the heretics;" and, it is remarkable that one petition requested the legitimation of the Lady Mary; a stipulation which was perhaps prompted by a desire to secure the goodwill of the emperor, with whom they soon began to open a negotiation which was manifestly treasonable. The sanction which they sought from the pope, his Holiness lost no time in expressing; sending Reginald Pole, a Plantagenet of pure descent, on whom he at the same time conferred a cardinal's hat, as envoy to the different princes whom he thought most likely to afford the insurgents effectual aid: to the king of France; to the regent of the Netherlands; and even to James V., king of Scotland, though usually there was but little friendship between the Scots and the English of the northern counties. But Pole was to convey to James a consecrated cap and sword, and presents so honourable were expected to determine him to draw the sword, if not for the aid of the English barons, at least in support of the rights of the Church. Pole, however, was refused an audience by Francis; and did not dare to trust himself in either England or Scotland; so that the rebels soon found themselves left to their own resources, and learnt too that they had miscalculated their efficacy. Gradually the king collected a force beyond their utmost power or audacity to encounter; they failed in a siege of Skipton Castle; and, in February, 1537, in an attack on Carlisle, and the frustration of their attempt on that great border fortress so disheartened them that they began to disperse; Henry sent Norfolk orders for their chastisement, couched in terms of inhuman severity. "Before Norfolk closed up his banner he was to cause such dreadful execution to be done upon a good number of the inhabitants of every town, village, and hamlet that had offended, that they might be a fearful spectacle to all others." Especially "he was

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without pity or circumstance to cause all the monks and canons that were in any wise faulty, to be tied up without further delay or ceremony." And these savage orders were strictly fulfilled; two peers, four abbots, and vast numbers of the lesser gentry, clergy and yeomen, were executed; and one lady, the wife of sir John Bulmer, after her husband had been hanged, was burnt to death, a severer punishment being, by some strange freak of the law, affixed to rebellion or treason when the culprits were of the softer sex. In the west another conspiracy was headed by the marquiss of Exeter and several other nobles, including two brothers of the cardinal; but was betrayed by Geoffrey de la Pole, the younger of the brothers. The chief conspirators were all executed; and Henry carried his vengeance so far as to compel the parliament to pass a bill of attainder against one lady who had been privy both to this conspiracy and to that of the nun of Kent, the cardinal's mother, the aged countess of Salisbury, the daughter of the duke of Clarence; and two years afterwards he signed the warrant for her execution.

These events only exasperated him the more against all who adhered to the pope. Besides Fisher and More, several priests of the most unblemished character and of high position in the Romish Church had been put to death for refusing to take the oath of supremacy, and, with an unparalleled cruelty, had even been denied the consolations of religion in their last moments. These persons however were hung as traitors; but others, for holding what were pronounced heretical opinions on the subject of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament, were burnt alive; and the blood which had been shed having only the same effect upon the king that it is said to have upon the tiger, of increasing his thirst for more, it was determined to frame a new enactment so comprehensive that scarcely any one could escape. The authority of Cromwell had been gradually giving way to that of Gardiner, the bishop of Winchester, a man of great laxity of principle, wholly devoid of scruples and of mercy, but of the most refined cunning, and also of consummate abilities of a higher class. His theological opinions were far more akin to those of Henry than Cromwell's; for, except in the substitution of his own supremacy for that of the pope, the king was as firm as ever in his preference for the old theology over that of Luther, and he now willingly acted on Gardiner's advice, and compelled the parliament to pass a law, known as that of the Six Articles, (and popularly nicknamed the whip with six lashes,) by which some of the principal doctrines of the Roman Catholic faith, that of transubstantiation, of the denial of the cup to the laity, of the necessity auricular confession, of purgatory, of the celibacy of priests, and of the permanent obligation of religious vows, were

established as the tenets of the Church of England; and those who denied the first were to be burnt as heretics, those who hesitated at any one of the five last were to be hanged as traitors. The iniquity of this law, which, coupled with that establishing the king's supremacy as head of the Church, placed the lives of almost the whole nation in danger, (since it was hardly possible to find any one who admitted the king's supremacy, and did not deny some of these other doctrines; or any one who believed in transubstantiation, without denying the king's supremacy,) roused the opposition of Cranmer, who behaved with unusual firmness and intrepidity on this occasion; and for three days maintained an eloquent argument in his place in parliament against this sanguinary proposal. Indeed he was personally interested, for he himself was married, and as such was within reach of its provisions; but his resistance was unavailing, and the bill passed; though Henry, on whom the archbishop's honest, single-hearted character had left an impression which no one else was ever able to make, pardoned his opposition, continued to show him distinguished favour, and on more than one occasion protected him from this law when his enemies sought to put it in operation against him.

But, before this bill was brought in, Henry chose to give a singular proof of the personal interest which he took in the theological part of the question, and with singularly bad taste entered the lists against one of his own subjects, making himself a party in a cause of which he was the ultimate judge; and, forgetful of the old proverb that "a king's face should give grace," became the actual instrument of condemnation to an unfortunate man, named Lambert. Lambert had been rash enough to express his dissent from the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, and an information having been laid against him, he appealed from the ecclesiastical tribunals to the king himself. The king, eager to display at once his learning and his orthodoxy, announced his intention to discuss the matter publicly with the prisoner; and on an appointed day appeared in Westminster Hall, attended by a long train of bishops, addressed him with all the hackneyed arguments with which the doctrine impugned was commonly supported, and was followed by Cranmer, (whose opinions on this important topic underwent a progressive modification, and who at this period seems to have agreed with Luther, and to have adopted his theory of consubstantiation,) then by Gardiner and eight more bishops, till Lambert was bewildered by the number of his antagonists, and silenced, if not refuted. At last, irritated by the firmness which his logic could not convince, nor his authority terrify, Henry brought up the final argument of all, and with a fierce voice asked his prisoner whether he would live or die. The answer was that he could not

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abandon his belief, but that he threw himself on the king's mercy. His was not the first innocence that had been disappointed in the result of such an appeal. With his own mouth Henry told him that he must die; and Cromwell, who agreed with his victim in his sentiments, was compelled, as vicar-general, to pronounce the sentence which committed him to the flames.

Cromwell's own ruin was near at hand. Queen Jane had died in October, 1537, a few days after giving birth to a son, who was named Edward, and who succeeded his father on the throne; and the king had been constantly thinking of supplying her place, without being able to fix on her successor. At last, in the autumn of 1539, Cromwell proposed to him Anne, the daughter of the duke of Cleves, who was believed to be very handsome, and known to be very tall, and whose father had great influence among the Lutheran princes of Germany. Henry agreed to the marriage, and Anne came over to England. But when the king saw her, he found her beauty very inferior to his expectations, and took so violent a dislike to her, that he could hardly be prevailed upon to make her his wife. When he had done so, further intimacy did not increase his liking for her; he could only speak English, French, and Latin; she could only speak Dutch. To crown all, in the course of the summer of 1540, he fell in love with Catharine Howard, a niece of the duke of Norfolk. The duke, who was warmly attached to the old religion, made use of the influence which the king's passion for his kinswoman gave him, to ruin Cromwell, whom he hated as the chief support of the new doctrines; and Henry, though he had lately created him earl of Essex, was easily brought to sacrifice a minister with whom he differed in opinion on several points of doctrine, though Cromwell's too accommodating conscience had allowed him to be the instrument of many of his most scandalous actions, and even, as we have seen in the case of Lambert, of the persecution of those with whom he agreed in opinion. It was impossible to find any pretence on which to found an accusation against him, so the precedent adopted in the case of the countess of Salisbury was followed, and the parliament was induced to pass a bill of attainder against him, without inquiring into his offence, and he was beheaded on Tower Hill, at the end of July.

In some important points his administration had been singularly energetic, wise, and beneficial. He had extended the laws of England to Wales, which country had previously been torn to pieces by the anarchy naturally arising from the existence of a number of petty and separate jurisdictions. Supported by his authority, lord Grey had put down a formidable rebellion in Ireland, which was now, for the first time, declared a kingdom instead of a lordship; and had made great progress in the pacification of the

whole island, though that good work was not completed till a year or two later; and though Grey himself was involved in Cromwell's ruin, and beheaded on some trivial charges by his thankless sovereign.

At the same time with the proceedings against Cromwell, steps were being taken to divorce the king from his wife. The grounds for such a bill make the parliament which could pass it on such, almost as contemptible as the king. At first he urged that Anne had been precontracted to the duke of Lorraine; but it was proved that the contract had been made in her infancy and had afterwards been annulled. He then pleaded that he had been deceived in his expectations of her beauty, and that when he had married her he had not consented inwardly, nor had a matrimonial mind towards her. He offered to provide her a pension, and Anne, who could hardly have been led by the treatment which she had received, to form any great attachment to him, and who perhaps thought that she had reason to feel thankful that he took so pacific a way of getting rid of her, consented to the divorce. The act was passed in July, and in August the king married the new object of his passion.

This marriage was even more unfortunate than the last. At first Henry was delighted with the beauty and grace of his new consort; but after a time it was revealed to him that Catharine had not only indulged in dissolute habits before her marriage, but that she had continued them since. The first part of the charge was certainly true; the second was probably false; at all events no proof was attempted to be given of it. A bill of attainder had been found a more speedy proceeding than a trial; such a bill was brought in against her, and in February, 1542, she was beheaded on Tower Hill. Several of her relations had been included in the bill, on the ground that they had been guilty of misprision of treason in not revealing Catharine's misconduct; but even Henry was ashamed to allow the sentence against them to be carried into execution, and they were pardoned.

The king of Scotland, James V., was Henry's nephew, and Henry had hoped to induce him to adopt the same steps concerning religion that he had pursued himself; proposing to him, first to assert his independence of the pope, and his own supremacy in ecclesiastical matters. And when he found he could not move his ambition, he tried to work upon his poverty, (the Scottish revenues were very scanty,) and to tempt him to enrich himself by the plunder of the religious bodies within his realm. But James was too closely connected with the French court, and too much influenced by his queen, a French princess, to be led into steps so unwelcome to his connexions with that kingdom; and evaded meeting his uncle at York, who expected to be better able to carry his point in

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a personal interview than by a long negotiation. Henry, as unscrupulous as he was wilful, was so irritated at this disappointment that he plotted to kidnap him while hunting near the border. But his council remonstrated against such treachery, pointing out not indeed its baseness but the improbability of success; and at last Henry, provoked at the frustration of his hopes, declared war against his nephew, and sent the duke of Norfolk to the north to command his army, who at first failed to gain any advantage over the Scots, and, after making an unimportant inroad, was forced to retreat across the border. But the discontent of the Scottish nobles at James's undue preference of his favourite Oliver Sinclair to the command of his army, effected for Henry what Norfolk was unable to achieve; when attacked on the Solway by a comparatively small body of the English troops, they fled; and the shame and grief which James felt at their conduct brought on a dangerous illness. His queen was on the point of her confinement, and, while he was lying sick on his bed, news was brought him that she was delivered of a female child. The disappointment to the king, who had been anxiously looking for a son, seemed all that was wanting to complete his misery. He exclaimed that the kingdom had come into his family through a girl, and would be lost to it through a girl; and in a few days he died of a broken heart.

Henry immediately endeavoured to take advantage of his death, by a proposal to contract his son Edward to the new-born princess, afterwards so celebrated for her misfortunes as Mary, queen of Scots; but, though willingly assented to by most of the Scotch nobles, this project was defeated by his own violence and arrogance: and Henry full of vexation at this disappointment, which he attributed to French influence, reconciled himself to the emperor, made a league with him, and invaded France, without gaining any permanent advantage, or any credit by his military operations in that country.

Before his invasion of France he had taken a new wife. Immediately after the execution of Catharine Howard, an act had been passed, declaring that any woman whom the king might marry should be held guilty of high treason, if she allowed the king to be deceived with respect to her previous chastity. The people, in general, ridiculed the statute, and said that from henceforth he must marry none but widows. Their jest proved true; for the sixth object of his choice, Catharine Parr, had been twice married; and the partisans of the Reformation were greatly comforted by her being inclined to favour their opinions, which, since the fall of Cromwell, had been exposed to great discouragement and persecution. In spite of Cranmer's efforts, the translation of the Bible, so lately sanctioned, had been subsequently condemned as erroneous,

and calculated to spread heretical notions. It had been made penal to read it in public. The persecution against all such as violated any portion of the act of the Six Articles was carried on with ceaseless vigour, and with merciless severity; and the law was now given a wider sweep than before, so that persons might be guilty of heresy without knowing it; for, in one new enactment respecting heresy, it was provided that the king might alter the whole act, or any clause of it, at his pleasure; and, in another, every opinion was declared to be heretical, which was contrary not only to the doctrines which the king at present asserted, but to any that he might promulgate hereafter. So utterly had both houses of parliament lost their former spirit, and so absolute was the despotism that the fierce will of Henry had succeeded in establishing.

The wars with France and Scotland lingered on without producing any results of importance. On one side Henry took Boulogne; on the other, the French fleet rode triumphantly down the Channel, attacked the English fleet at Spithead, under the command of lord Lisle, with greatly superior numbers, and even landed some troops in the Isle of Wight, but they could not hold the ground which for a moment they had won, and finally retreated to their own shores after sustaining a loss far greater than that which they had inflicted. In the north the Scots, aided by a body of French troops, crossed the eastern, while the English crossed the western border of the two countries, and both armies committed great ravages; till, at last, Henry, finding himself deserted by the emperor, who had made a separate peace with Francis, was glad also to desist from the war. Scotland was included in the treaty, and peace was restored; but the war had been very expensive; and, to prop the embarrassed revenue, Henry adulterated the coinage to such an extent, that he reduced it to half its value. Such a measure was as impolitic, as it was dishonest. It caused great distress at home, and great embarrassment to all mercantile transactions abroad, so that his successor was obliged to withdraw the money of his latter years from circulation.

The uncontrolled power which the parliament had given Henry to regulate the religion of the kingdom produced its natural effect upon so capricious and domineering a temper by rendering his conduct more inconsistent than ever. At one time the adherents of the pope fancied themselves sufficiently in favour to attack Cranmer, and the lords of the council, before whom informations were laid against him, kept him waiting for hours at the door of their chamber among the servants and common people, and, when he was admitted, threatened to send him to the Tower, till he produced a ring, which the king had given him as a pledge of his

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favour, and appealed to Henry himself, who, on the matter being referred to him, reprimanded the accusers and the council in the severest terms, and pronounced the archbishop the most honest and loyal of all his subjects. At another time the partisans of the reformers had influence enough to bring about the disgrace of Gardiner, and to procure the erasure of his name as one of his executors, and of the future council of regency from the king's will.

But still the religious persecution continued with unabated severity. Even women were burnt for denying transubstantiation, and among them a lady, named Anne Askew, who had some connexion with the queen herself; and even Catharine was at one time in danger; for, when in conversation with Henry she expressed opinions not quite in harmony with his, he showed so much displeasure, that the chancellor Wriothesley, a man of a temper almost as fierce as his master, obtained leave to draw up an impeachment against her, and procured Henry's signature to the document and his order to arrest her the next day. There seemed every probability of a third tragedy on Tower Hill, when fortunately Catharine received notice of her danger; and on the next opportunity she renewed the conversation, professing occasionally to suggest doubts, which in reality she did not feel, for the purpose of being instructed by the learning with which the king solved them, and explained the difficulties which were too great for her unassisted intellect. This timely flattery saved her; and when Wriothesley, in accordance with the king's commands, came to arrest her, he was astonished at finding her in friendly conversation with the king, and at being himself received by Henry with the appellations of "fool," "knave," and "beast," and a peremptory order to depart from his presence.

But the time was at hand when Henry himself was to be summoned before his Judge. He was not an old man; but, always corpulent, he had of late become so unwieldy as to be unable to be moved about his palace without the aid of machines; and, as soon as he was deprived of his usual exercise, his health began to break visibly. His illness did not improve his temper; and the last months of his reign were sullied by one of his most disgraceful acts of tyranny. There was no nobleman in the kingdom who had done him equal service with the duke of Norfolk. At the beginning of his reign he had won for him the victory of Flodden, and he had on all occasions borne his part with the greatest success and honour in wars abroad, and at the council-board at home. His son, the earl of Surrey, was more than worthy of such a father. Brave and chivalrous as he, he also united the fire of the poet to the accomplishments of the courtier, and was celebrated throughout Europe for the genius and spirit with which he upheld the fame of his mistress

with both lyre and lance; but these men, the first subjects in the land, were to die. Their exact offence is unknown; in fact, they had committed none; but they had probably excited the jealousy of the Seymours, the uncles of the young prince Edward, the heir to the throne, who, looking forward to the regency, were eager to remove those, who, from the general esteem in which they were held, might be expected to prove their most formidable competitors.

Surrey, being a commoner, was tried before a jury. The chief accusation made against him was, that he had borne on his shield the arms of Edward the Confessor, which was interpreted as a sign that he aspired to the throne. He proved that these arms had been formally assigned him by the College of Heralds; and, even if he had assumed them without authority, there was no law which made such an act criminal, much less treasonable. Other charges alleged that he had used ardent and menacing language respecting the earl of Hertford, Henry's brother-in-law; and that he had been in communication with cardinal Pole. Such accusations seem as if it were intended to make their number counterbalance their triviality. To suppose that any accumulation of them could amount to treason was absurd. But the severity of judges of every class, during this reign, is one of its saddest features. And of high treason Surrey was convicted, and executed on the 19th of January, 1547.

Luckily, as his father was a peer, the proceedings in his case could not be so rapid; and, as no charge could be brought against him, except that he had stated that the king was ill, and not likely to last long, which had probably been said by every person in the kingdom, it was resolved to proceed against him by a bill of attainder. Throughout this sad reign no jury and no parliament showed the slightest hesitation at shedding innocent blood; and the attainder was passed through both houses, without debate. The 29th of January was appointed for Norfolk's death; but, when the scaffold was preparing, news came to the lieutenant of the Tower that the king had died in the night; and the lieutenant, on his own authority, suspended the execution.

Henry was fifty-four years old, and had reigned nearly thirty-eight years. Before his death he made a will, in accordance with the power which had been given him by parliament, leaving the crown first to his son, next to the princesses Mary and Elizabeth in succession, and then to the children of his younger sister, Mary, duchess of Suffolk, to the exclusion of the posterity of his eldest sister, the queen of Scotland. In this particular the will was afterwards set aside.

Owing to some singular laws which were passed in this reign,

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we are better able than at most times to estimate the condition of the poor during this period. Legislation tried, as it has done since, to fix the price of food, or at least to confine its variations within certain bounds; and we find that the average price of wheat was taken at six shillings and eightpence a quarter. When it was cheaper, merchants were allowed to export it, in order to keep the price up to that point, for the encouragement of the grower; when it was dearer, it might be imported from foreign countries, in order to keep it down to that price, for the necessities of the consumer. Beef and pork were to be sold for a halfpenny a pound, mutton for three farthings; but, in point of fact, these meats, when bought in larger quantities than a single pound, were usually to be procured at a much lower rate. The highest price for the strongest beer was fixed at a penny, for the most costly wines at a shilling a gallon. A penny, therefore, would then procure as large a quantity of the necessaries of life as a shilling will now; and, as wages were also fixed by law, according to which the most ordinary labourers received threepence-halfpenny a day, it is clear that the working classes were in a much better condition than they are at present. In the time of Elizabeth the rate of wages was altered, and they were regulated on a kind of sliding scale by the price of food.

The lawmakers, however, did not limit their interference to such matters as these, but carried it to a degree that, to our present notions, seems as intolerable as it was unwise. In those days no man might fancy that he could do as he liked with his own. The great landowners found the size of the farms which they might let defined by strict provisions. The tenants were sometimes taught, by the same authority, how their land was to be cropped. If manufacturers were compelled to sell their wares at what were adjudged to be reasonable prices, their customers were sometimes compelled to buy what they did not want, for their encouragement. Sumptuary laws regulated, not only the apparel which a man might wear, but the food which he might eat; and the greatest nobles in the land submitted to an enactment, by which their dinners were curtailed to two courses, of two kinds only, and those without sauce.

The pastimes of the people had begun to change, and vigorous efforts were made to bring them back into the old course. The young nobles had begun to weary of the tilt-yard, and to addict themselves to dice, and cards, and dances; and the yeomen, following their example, had deserted the archery ground for the bowling-green. The nobles Henry tried to reform by his own example, delighting, as he did, in athletic games and in the jousts, in which he greatly excelled; and for the lower classes he re-enacted the statute of Winchester, as it was called, originally passed in the time

of Edward I., which, among other clauses, enjoined that every man under sixty years of age should furnish himself with a bow and arrows, and practise shooting; that even children of seven years old should have weapons suited to their strength, and should begin to learn the art by which their forefathers had won such glory for England. At the same time, to check the tendency to idleness, which the example of their superiors seems to have increased among the lower classes, the most severe laws were enacted against able-bodied beggars; and those who had been convicted three times of such an act of vagrancy were declared liable to be hanged.

Henry himself it is not very easy to appreciate correctly; and the great event of his reign, the breach with Rome, contributes to the difficulty, as much as the inconsistency of his character. The followers of the reformed religion (though nothing can be more absurd than to look upon Henry as a supporter of their doctrines) extolled him as the discarder of the papal supremacy. The adherents of the pope vilified him on the same grounds. And even in the present century histories of his reign have been written, on both sides, in a spirit for which nothing but such a bias seems sufficient to account. As to his conduct in that respect it seems plain that he separated very unwillingly from the pope; that, though not much under the influence of religion in his conduct, as a theologian he was attached to the doctrines of the Church of Rome; but, as a proud, violent, and arbitrary king, he was far more devoted to his own will, and to the maintenance of his own unquestioned authority. He was in many respects a clever and accomplished prince, of great courage and great personal skill in the use of arms, though the victory of Guinegate proved him to be utterly destitute of military talent. He had greater political ability, though he can hardly be called a successful statesman, his acuteness in perceiving what was desirable not being equalled by his steadiness or temper in carrying out his views. In his manners, especially in the early part of his reign, he was courteous, generous, and affable; and, so engaging are these qualities, and even the recollection of them, that to the end of his life he was popular with the generality of the nation.

As a king he deserves little respect from a lover of freedom. He trampled on the liberties of his people, ruled for many years without a parliament, in defiance of the express provisions of the Great Charter of the land, and in every respect endeavoured to establish an absolute tyranny, not only over the actions, but even over the minds of his subjects. But the great, the ineffaceable stain upon his memory is the ruthless manner in which he shed blood, and the blood which should have been dearest to him, for the gratification of his most trifling caprices. No tyrant of modern history

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has approached him in this respect. Others have ruthlessly cleared from their path those who stood in the way of their projects, or those by whose discontent or ambition they have fancied themselves endangered; but Henry alone sent to the scaffold the wives who had lain upon his bosom, the friends with whom he had walked and jested, the ministers who had served him faithfully, because they interfered with a passing fancy, a sudden caprice, or had awakened a groundless jealousy. These acts, proving him incapable of love or friendship or gratitude, have rendered his name a byword among the nations; and if those ardent and noble spirits have been right who have thought honourable renown and the affectionate, respectful remembrance of posterity a worthy and sufficient meed for gallant actions, and lives of virtue and usefulness, Henry, on the contrary, in the general detestation with which his memory is regarded, may be thought, in some degree, to be still undergoing a fitting expiation for his manifold atrocities.

CHAPTER XXX.

EDWARD VI.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperor.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Charles V.	Francis I.		Paul III.	
	Henry . . .	1547	Julius III. . .	1549
<i>Scotland.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>			
Mary.	Charles V.			

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1547.

EDWARD VI., being but nine years old at his father's death, was of course incapable of undertaking the cares of government; and Henry had been empowered by the parliament to name a regent or council of regency during his minority. He had, in consequence, appointed sixteen executors of his will, who should act as the young king's council till he arrived at the age of eighteen, of whom the most important members were the earl of Hertford, a brother of his queen, Jane Seymour, and, as such, uncle to Edward; Cranmer, the primate; Wriothesley, the chancellor; and lord Lisle, the high admiral. But Hertford soon contrived to engross the chief power to himself, and by gratifying the most discontented of his colleagues with peerages or promotions, and grants of estates

out of the lands which had belonged to the suppressed monasteries, he procured their consent to his assuming the title of Protector of the kingdom, and Guardian of the king's person. He himself was created duke of Somerset; Wriothesley was made earl of Southampton; and Lisle, earl of Warwick. Sir Thomas Seymour, another of the king's uncles, who had not been named one of Henry's executors, but who formed one of a second council, appointed to aid the others in cases of difficulty, was made lord Seymour; and, as he was still discontented, and formidable from his abilities and ambition, Warwick resigned his office of admiral in his favour.

Somerset was favourable to the Reformation, and Southampton was firmly opposed to it. He had also, as long as it was in his power, resisted the protector's elevation above his colleagues; and, though he had at last acquiesced in it, he was likely to avail himself of every opportunity to renew his opposition. On both these accounts Somerset determined to get rid of him, and, as he was not so much a lawyer as a politician, the illegal manner in which he entrusted his duties as chancellor to deputies soon afforded a pretext for doing so. The case was so strong against him, that he was glad to compound for his safety by relinquishing his office and his seat in the council; and Somerset, thus left without a rival, became in effect the absolute governor of the kingdom.

He began at once to turn his attention towards Scotland, where religious differences were causing disturbances greater even than those to which they had given rise in England. James had been succeeded by his daughter Mary, an infant born only a week before his death; and the Scottish estates had conferred the regency on the earl of Arran, who was himself the next heir to the throne, though Cardinal Beaton produced a will purporting to have been made by the late king on his deathbed, in which he was nominated to that office. The queen mother was a French princess of the house of Guise; and Beaton, who was her chief adviser was thus the head not only of the Popish, but of the French interest in Scotland; and as such was equally hated by the Scotch reformers, and by the English king. They united in plotting his murder: when in May, 1546, George Wishart, a zealous reformer, was burnt by his sentence at St. Andrew's, he threatened the cardinal with early retribution; and before the end of the month his threat was fulfilled, when a body of knights and nobles stormed the castle, slew Beaton, hung out his dead body over the walls, and occupied the castle as a Protestant stronghold; while John Knox, the great preacher of the new religion in that kingdom openly defended the deed. The whole nation was divided into two parties, the middle and lower classes being zealous for the Reformation,

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while the chief nobles, and the queen dowager, adhered to the old religion. Somerset was above all things desirous to carry out Henry's plan of marrying the young king to the equally youthful queen of Scotland. The Protestant party in Scotland were as eager for it as himself, but for that very reason it was distasteful to the nobles, and to the earl of Arran, the governor of the kingdom; and Somerset took the ill-judged step of endeavouring to compel, instead of to conciliate, their assent, and invaded Scotland with a large army. This violent measure roused the national feeling, ever too much inclined to war with England. Even those who were favourable to the match, avowed that they did not like so rough a wooing, and Arran was able to raise a large force to repel the invasion. The two armies met near a hill called Pinkey, a few miles from Edinburgh, and the Scots were totally defeated. But the protector, instead of prosecuting his victory in person, returned to England to conduct the important affairs which required his presence at home, leaving Warwick to continue the war, and to negotiate for peace. And the Scotch, though they lost several important towns, protracted their resistance till important succours arrived from France, under protection of which a parliament, held at Haddington, decided that the young queen should be sent to France, to be betrothed to the dauphin, the son of Henry II., for Francis had died soon after Henry VIII. In July, 1548, Mary was conveyed in safety to Paris; and thus, all hopes of the union of the two kingdoms by the marriage of their sovereigns were terminated.

The object for which Somerset had been anxious to return to England was the advancement of the Reformation; and he began by the repeal of the severe laws extending to the crime of treason which had been passed in the late reign, and of the statute of the Six Articles; most of the laws against heresy were also revoked; so that though it was still a crime punishable by the state, it was not so easy as formerly to involve persons in such an accusation. After these preliminary steps he proceeded zealously but cautiously in the object which he had at heart, acting in many instances under the advice of Cranmer, who to vast theological learning and sincere piety added the most amiable moderation, and the most steady judgment. By his advice, the orders issued for the establishment of the reformed worship were accompanied by the publication of books well calculated to recommend that worship to the minds of the people: of Erasmus's Paraphrase of the New Testament, of the book of Homilies, and of the Catechism, which, with slight additions, has come down to our times, and is still enjoined by our Church, and reverently used by every parent as the best medium of instruction for the youthful Christian.

In some points, however, Somerset differed from the archbishop. From the very outset there were two parties among the reformers. One which desired to limit the Reformation to the suppression of all the doctrines or practices of the Romish church, which could be proved from Scripture to be erroneous. The other, carrying their hatred of Popery to an unreasonable length, looked upon the mere fact of any usage having been admitted at Rome, to be in itself a proof of its being vicious; and protested against many forms, some indifferent, some innocent, some absolutely salutary, solely on the ground that their maintenance would preserve a similarity, as far as they went, to the Romish worship. These men were the fathers of the Puritan party in the English church, and their views were now embraced by the Protector, who took more than one opportunity of showing the favour with which he regarded them.

The new system was received with very general acquiescence: and of those who opposed it no one was at first treated with any severity except Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, who was thrown into prison, and detained a long time in close confinement without any specific charge being brought against him; but as, though he was a man of consummate talents, he was neither liked nor respected, and, as the spirit which in times past would have looked not at the injustice done to one individual, but to the injury inflicted in his person on the general liberty and rights of the whole nation, had become completely dormant under the arbitrary rule of the two last sovereigns, his case excited no notice or discontent.

Far greater was the disapprobation with which people saw the conduct of the Protector to his brother, the Admiral, though had they not been brothers, lord Seymour deserved his fate. In many respects they resembled each other; both were men of inordinate ambition and insatiable rapacity; neither was endowed with any great capacity, though in that respect, for science in war Somerset's reputation was the higher, since he had gained the battle of Pinkey; while the Admiral, though a brave sailor, had only served under the command of others. In private character they differed widely; the elder was a man of decorous virtue, and not without a sincere sense of religion; the younger was notorious for unscrupulous profligacy. He had no cause to complain of the Protector's want of affection; he had obtained from him rank, office, and enormous grants of the crown domains in no fewer than eighteen different counties; but he aimed at more substantial power, and as his first step towards its acquisition, he solicited and obtained the hand of the queen dowager; and, when she died in childbed in September, he aspired to an union with the princess Elizabeth, who, according to some accounts, was not averse to his proposals. This project, however, neither Somerset nor the council would

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countenance; and in disappointment and revenge he began to plot against the Protector, relying in some degree on Warwick's support; though that nobleman was in reality his most dangerous enemy.

Warwick was the son of Dudley, the infamous minister of Henry VII.; and, having been relieved by the late king from the effects of the bill of attainder passed against his father, showed such eminent abilities as rapidly recommended him to the favour of Henry, who created him lord Lisle, and employed him in many important affairs; but he was ambitious and thoroughly unprincipled, and now fomented the ill feeling which he perceived to exist between the two Seymours, hoping to undo them both, and to rise by their fall. Somerset's natural affection for the Admiral had been weakened by his duchess, indignant at having to yield precedence to the wife of his younger brother, who of course retained her rank as queen dowager; and disputes had since arisen between them respecting some of the crown jewels, which Catharine claimed as having been presented to her by Henry.

With strange imprudence, the Admiral, even before his plans were ripe for execution, revealed them to different members of the council who, he might have known, were more attached to his brother than to himself, and thus compelled them to institute an enquiry into his conduct. His plot to deprive the Protector of his authority Somerset himself would have pardoned: but it was proved that he had induced the Master of the Mint to commit great frauds for the purpose of supplying him with treasure. That he had bought the Scilly isles, notorious as a haunt of pirates, apparently in order to give those bands of desperadoes protection which might bind them to his service: and that he had erected two cannon foundries, which were constantly at work making guns and shot. Such acts were incompatible with innocent intentions; and in the judgment of the council they proved him guilty of treason. The soundness of their conclusion cannot well be questioned. But men in power had not yet learned the duty of giving public proof of the justice of their acts: and in this instance, instead of bringing the culprit to a regular trial, the council prevailed on the parliament to condemn him by a bill of attainder, a proceeding which always bears the appearance of accomplishing by undue influence and force what law and strict justice will not countenance. Yet it was not without great difficulty that they could prevail on the Protector to allow the sentence to be executed; though the Admiral's last act showed how fully it was deserved; since his last hours were spent in writing secret letters to the princesses Mary and Elizabeth, to urge them to procure his brother's downfall.

In the mean time there was considerable discontent in many parts of the kingdom. The monks had been remarkably easy landlords, being contented with rents which were not a fifth, and sometimes not a tenth of the value of their estates; and the distribution of their lands among new masters, who dealt more rigorously with their tenants, at first produced great distress, which was aggravated by the adulteration of the coinage which had been carried out towards the end of the last reign; and insurrections broke out in nearly all the southern and midland counties, which for a while threatened dangerous consequences. In Norfolk the insurgents were so strong, that, under the guidance of Ket, a tanner, they gave battle to lord Northampton, and defeated him, and the Protector was forced to send for lord Warwick and 6000 men, from the army raised for the Scotch war, before they could be put down.

The war with Scotland still lingered on, and, though no decisive battles took place, the general result was unfavourable to the English, who were forced gradually to abandon most of the strong places of which they had made themselves masters; while at the same time the king of France attacked the English possessions in that country, and reduced some fortresses, though he was unable to take Boulogne, which however was, by treaty, to be restored in the year 1554. These events made Somerset very unpopular, and his personal conduct was in many respects calculated to increase the disfavour with which he was regarded. The nobles, whom he treated with great haughtiness, envied him the rapid acquisition of his high rank and great estate; nor did they forbear to accuse him of having accumulated a large portion of his wealth by illegal and shameful means, such as the sale of offices, and a general corruption of law and justice. They charged him also with having instigated some of the most formidable of the recent tumults; professing to have proof of his having had the ringleaders in his pay; while the people in general were indignant at the sight of his numerous palaces; and especially of one splendid abode which he was building in the Strand, and to supply materials for which he was pulling down the churches in the neighbourhood. Warwick had been waiting patiently for such a feeling, which he had foreseen would arise, and was prepared to take advantage of it as soon as it had acquired sufficient strength. The council of regency, who had been completely superseded in their functions by the Protector, gladly joined in the attempt to overthrow him; by public proclamation they denounced him to the people; in an address to Edward himself they enlarged upon the unconstitutional manner in which he had engrossed the whole power of the kingdom, upon his unnatural cruelty to his own brother, and upon the odium

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which his conduct had brought upon the king's government; and procured the royal sanction for his removal from his office, and for his committal to the Tower. His imprisonment was not long, and, as the affection which the king still entertained for him deterred his enemies from proposing more rigorous measures against him, they were contented with imposing an enormous fine upon him, and then allowed him to recover his freedom. The supreme authority was now in Warwick's hands, and he willingly made peace with France and Scotland, though he had resisted such a step when it had been proposed by Somerset a few months before.

The fall of Somerset did not, however, retard the progress of the Reformation; on the contrary, as the king himself, as he advanced in years and became better able to understand the matters in dispute, showed a very decided and firm attachment to its principles, it proceeded more vigorously than ever. Gardiner, and Bonner, bishop of London, were deprived of their sees, as also were Heath and Day, the bishops of Worcester and Chichester, men of great virtue, learning, and moderation: the permission which had been granted to the princess Mary, to have the mass celebrated in her private chapel, was withdrawn, avowedly in consequence of the personal scruples of the king; and, the pernicious principle of intolerance at last asserting its influence even over the gentle disposition of Cranmer, two unhappy convicts were committed to the flames, not indeed for the assertion of any of the papal doctrines, but for heretical opinions affecting the very foundations of Christianity. At the same time, that no means of instructing the nation in religious truth might be omitted, some of the most distinguished foreign reformers were invited to England, and received preferment or appointments in the universities. Peter Martyr became divinity professor at Oxford; Bucer at Cambridge; and, on his death, that office was kept vacant for a considerable time, in the hope that Melancthon himself would come over and occupy it.

Aided by their piety and learning, Cranmer undertook the composition of a set of articles which should speak with authority the sentiments of the Church, and secure uniformity among its preachers. It would occupy too much of our space to record the principal matters contained in them, or the points of difference between them and the present articles of our Church, as they were finally settled in the reign of Elizabeth. It is sufficient here to state that they displayed in an admirable degree not only the learning of Cranmer, and of Ridley, who had succeeded Bonner in the see of London, but their moderate tempers and comprehensive wisdom; being framed so as to allow as wide a latitude for differences of opinion as was compatible with the maintenance of the great cardinal

doctrines of sound Christianity ; and this disposition of theirs was the more admirable, because there was, at the same time, a party arising of a much more rigid mould, whose hatred of popery extended itself to its most innocent forms, and most useful establishments, and which, as has been already mentioned, when fully developed, grew into the great puritan faction, which for a while overturned both Church and State. The most prominent member of the party at this moment was Hooper, who, when the bishopric of Gloucester was offered to him, hesitated long before he could be prevailed upon to accept it, because he had scruples about the episcopal robes, which he had learned during a residence in Switzerland to think unlawful, as a relic of popery.

Fresh dissensions broke out between Warwick, who had lately been created duke of Northumberland, and Somerset, who had gradually been restored to favour, though not to power, and who was so elated at the evident good will with which his royal nephew regarded him, as to meditate bringing about a marriage between him and one of his own daughters. Northumberland had entertained a design of marrying the king to a French princess, and had set on foot a negotiation for that purpose with the French court, which willingly acceded to his proposals ; and being thoroughly alarmed lest the suggestions of Somerset should defeat his views, he determined to complete his destruction. Towards the end of 1551 the duke and several of his principal partisans were suddenly arrested ; and he was impeached before the peers on two separate charges. Of a project to raise an insurrection he was acquitted ; but of an intention to procure the murder of Northumberland he was convicted, in spite of his most solemn denial and a complete absence of proof. He himself admitted that he had entertained the idea of seizing him, and putting him under constraint for a time ; but even that design, he asserted, he had subsequently abandoned. The young king was persuaded to consent to his death, and he was beheaded at the beginning of the next year.

The power of Northumberland was now more absolute than ever ; but the visibly decaying health of Edward threatened it with an early termination ; and the Duke applied himself to obviate the personal disappointment which he might expect from his death. Edward's attachment to the reformed religion disposed him to view with great reluctance the prospect of his sister Mary's succession to the throne. She was endowed with no slight degree of her father's pertinacity, and was inflexible in her adherence to the generality of the old forms and doctrines ; being fortified in her determination by the belief that her kinsman the emperor would be able to protect her. When, towards the end of the last reign the king's council had forbidden her any further use of the mass, Charles

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had endeavoured to aid her in escaping from the country: with the intention, it was believed, of marrying her to his son the arch-duke Philip; and, when this prospect was defeated, had retaliated on the English ambassador at Brussels, prohibiting him from using the English communion service; and at last had even threatened to make war upon Edward if she were not treated with greater indulgence. He encouraged her also to persist in a plea which she put forward, though consistent neither with the constitution nor with any conceivable principles of government, that laws made during a king's minority were invalid. It was therefore certain that if she became queen she would be wholly under his influence; and being so, would restore the old religion; and Northumberland skilfully availed himself of this probability to induce Edward to make a settlement of the kingdom, passing over not only Mary, but Elizabeth also, as having been pronounced illegitimate by an act of parliament which had never been repealed, and bequeathing the crown to lady Jane Grey, the daughter of the duke of Suffolk, and grand-daughter of Mary, the sister of Henry VIII. Her mother was still alive, and had, of course, a title superior to that of her daughter, but she was willing to waive it, and to give Jane in marriage to lord Guildford Dudley, Northumberland's fourth son. The lawyers who were consulted were unwilling to draw the requisite deed, which they pronounced not only illegal, but treasonable; but they were overruled by Edward himself, who showed the greatest possible earnestness in the matter, giving them his orders in person, and issuing a formal commission to them to authorize their compliance; and it was at last drawn and signed, not only by the king, but by the lords of the council of regency, who took an oath to aid in carrying it into effect. Cranmer long refused to add his signature, but his scruples yielded at last to the personal importunity of Edward himself; and his consent was remembered against him at a later day, when the recollection of it had perhaps no small share in producing his destruction.

The king's health grew worse and worse; at last, when the skill of the regular physicians seemed unavailing, Northumberland called in a female quack, who undertook to ensure his recovery, and soon rendered it perfectly hopeless, if it was not so before. On the 6th of July, 1553, he died, to the great grief of the nation, who saw in the early virtues and eminent abilities, of which he had already given ample promise, the fairest prospect of a long enjoyment of tranquillity and prosperity.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MARY.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	A.D.	<i>France.</i>	A.D.	<i>Popes.</i>	A.D.
Charles V.		Henry II.		Julius III.	
Ferdinand. . . .	1558	<i>Spain.</i>		Marcellus II. . .	1555
<i>Scotland.</i>		Charles V.		Paul IV.	1556
Mary.		Philip II. . . .	1555		

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ORTHUMBERLAND and the council at first concealed the news of Edward's death, hoping to get Mary into their hands before it reached her. But she obtained certain intelligence of the fact while on

her way to visit her dying brother, from whom she had received a fictitious summons to his deathbed; and, at once retracing her steps and retiring into Norfolk, she displayed a courage and firmness that soon disconcerted the plans of the conspirators against her. She wrote a letter to the council, requiring them to proclaim her as queen: to which they replied by a letter challenging her legitimacy, and enjoining her to pay a cheerful obedience to Jane, whom her brother had appointed his successor; and also by a formal proclamation of Jane in the streets of London; but the people in general, who were scarcely acquainted with her name, received their proclamation with an ominous silence. Several nobles of great influence rapidly joined Mary, and in a few days she found herself sufficiently strong to advance towards London. Northumberland in vain endeavoured to oppose her progress. He was arrested and committed to the Tower, and Mary was formally proclaimed queen, amid the acclamations of the people, only ten days after the performance of the same ceremony in honour of Jane.

Jane had been most reluctant to assume the dignity forced upon her so unexpectedly, and had only yielded to the compulsion of her parents. She now, with the greatest willingness, laid it down, hoping with her return to private life to return also to the religious exercises and literary studies which had previously been the chief occupation of her exemplary life. She and her husband, however,

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with her father, the duke of Suffolk, were arrested and imprisoned in the Tower till the queen's decision could be taken as to their treatment.

In the punishment of those who had conspired against her Mary was unusually moderate. She did indeed bring to trial those chiefly concerned in the attempt to deprive her of the throne. Northumberland, with two of his sons besides lord Guildford; Jane Grey, her husband and her father; and Cranmer, though his share in the transaction was confined to his having been an unwilling witness to King Edward's will. But his real crime was the part he had taken in the divorce of her mother, which Mary could never forgive; and for that she was resolved that, sooner or later, he should atone with his life. For the present, however, he was spared; chiefly because, being archbishop, he could not be put to death till he had been deposed by the pope; and at the moment Northumberland himself and two of his associates were the only persons executed.

The parliament was summoned to meet in October, and, before its assembling, a division arose among her councillors as to whether the queen should retain the title of the Supreme Head of the Church in her kingdom. Cardinal Pole, who had been appointed the papal legate as soon as the news of her accession reached Rome, pointed out to her that the question of her own legitimacy depended solely on the right of the pope to the supremacy which her father had claimed. But Gardiner, who was at first her chief adviser, looking at the question in a political light, though averse to any change of doctrine, was desirous to shake off all dependence on the pope, and, judging that such a line of conduct would be acceptable to the nation in general, persuaded her to disregard the apparent inconsistency, and for a time to maintain the title appropriated by Henry. Still this decision did not prevent the instant re-establishment of the old religion in every other particular. The deprived bishops were restored, several of those most favourable to the Reformation imprisoned, and all the acts of Edward relating to religion were repealed. A great portion of the nation acquiesced not unwillingly in the change. The purer doctrines of the reformed religion had not as yet had time to take a deep hold of the feelings of the people; and many, no doubt, were conciliated by the denial of the papal supremacy, which appeared to statesmen the most important matter in dispute between the two sects. Even the princess Elizabeth was persuaded or compelled to return to the old forms, and gratified the emperor, who took great interest in the matter, by requesting him to send her a cross and the vessels necessary for the worship of the mass in her private chapel.

The next matter to be decided on was the marriage of the queen.

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She was determined to marry at once, in the hope of having children, whom she might bring up in the firm resolution of maintaining the Roman Catholic religion; and there were several candidates for her hand. Gardiner exerted all his influence in favour of Courtenay, earl of Devonshire, a descendant of the house of York, young and handsome, but weak and dissolute. Mary, however, fixed on her cousin Philip, son of Charles V., already sovereign of the Low Countries, and heir of Spain, and of the great acquisitions which that country had lately made in the New World. Such a connexion was unpopular with every class in the kingdom; and most so with the ablest statesmen. Gardiner protested against it; the parliament addressed her against it: and had an especial title to be listened to, because Henry's will had made her succession conditional on her not marrying against the consent of the council. But she was determined; and at last surprised the council into consenting. It is but too probable that many of the members, though the wealthiest nobles in the land, were sufficiently base to be swayed by bribes which the Spanish ambassador distributed with a lavish hand. At all events, in the spring of 1554 the details were settled, and the prince was invited to England for the immediate celebration of the marriage.

Foreign nations, and especially France, regarded this connexion between the two countries, England and Spain, with great jealousy; and the knowledge that it was determined on kindled a most formidable insurrection. It had been carefully considered, and the parts to be borne in it were assigned to separate leaders, when Gardiner, whose suspicions had been awakened, contrived to extract from the weakness of the earl of Devonshire certain information as to the existence, if not as to the details, of the plot. The other conspirators, finding themselves betrayed, precipitated their attempts, and thus deprived them of the simultaneousness which could alone have rendered them successful. The most formidable effort was made in Kent by sir Thomas Wyatt, who suddenly appeared at the head of 1500 men, seized Rochester, and marched upon London, being joined by such numbers on his march, that when he reached Deptford he had 15,000 followers around his standard; but the Londoners refused to join him. The queen, who again displayed the greatest courage and presence of mind, offered a reward for his arrest; disappointed and dismayed, he hesitated what course to pursue, and his hesitation was fatal to him. He was seized, and committed to the Tower, and soon after tried and beheaded. The only peer except Courtenay who was implicated in this rebellion was the duke of Suffolk. As soon as the news of Wyatt's rising reached London, he hastened down to Warwickshire to rouse the people there to a similar attempt; but he too

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was seized, and brought to London as a prisoner. He shared the fate of Wyatt, as he deserved ; but very general commiseration was excited by the execution of his daughter, lady Jane Grey, and her husband, whom his treason also consigned to the scaffold. It was not imputed to them that they had ever been in the very slightest degree privy to the conspiracy, but the emperor, whose son the queen was about to marry, urged her, for her own safety, to put them to death, as affording a possible pretext for subsequent rebellions. Gardiner seconded the advice with all the energy of his character, and, their previous conviction for treason in assuming the crown being revived against them, they were beheaded on the 12th of February.

Wyatt's objects had been the deposition of Mary, and the establishment of Elizabeth as queen ; and the French ambassador had given both these designs eager though secret support. And, in truth, even without the Spanish marriage, Mary had offended and exasperated the most right thinking of her subjects by the enmity and injustice with which she treated her sister, and by the steps which, as was well known, she meditated to deprive her of her rights, if not of her life. She had already proposed to her chief councillors to rearrange the succession to the crown, settling it either on Mary of Scotland, or on Lady Lennox, declaring that, even if Elizabeth should change her religion and become a Roman Catholic, she still should "never reign in England with consent of hers." She even listened with approval to the suggestions of the Spanish ambassador, that she should arrest her and put her to death ; and was only prevented from carrying this proposal into execution by the remonstrances of some of her council,* who showed a resolution not to forbear from the employment of force, if force should be necessary to prevent such an atrocity.

In July Philip landed at Southampton, and proceeded in great state to Winchester, where he was married to Mary by Gardiner, as the queen would not consent that the archbishop Cranmer should officiate in her presence. But Gardiner himself had opposed the match with all his power, and, finding himself unable to prevent it, had provided carefully for the independence of the kingdom ; stipulating in the treaty in which the marriage was agreed upon,

* It is disputed who these members of the council were ; and the extreme contradiction of the statements made on the subject by the two most recent historians, both professing to found their account on original documents, affords a striking proof of the extreme difficulty of arriving at a certain understanding of different circumstances in history. Froude is positive that Gardiner was eager for Elizabeth's destruction : "he would have murdered Elizabeth with the forms of law or without," *vi.* 395 (see also 120, 155,) but that Gardiner was overruled by Paget. On the other hand, Dean Hook affirms "we have the highest evidence possible, that of Simond Renard, in a confidential letter to the emperor, that instead of being the enemy of queen Elizabeth, Gardiner prevented her destruction, as urged upon Mary by the Spanish ambassador, and by Charles." *Lives of Archbishops*, new series, *ii.* 308.

that the whole power of the government should still belong exclusively to the queen; that Philip should not take either her or her children abroad without the consent of the nobility; and that, though Philip had a son by his former marriage, (the unfortunate Don Carlos, whose sad and mysterious fate shortly afterwards awakened a curiosity and interest which has lasted even to the present day,) still any son whom Mary might bear him should inherit, with England, his Flemish dominions and the rich duchy of Burgundy.

Another parliament was summoned for the November of this year; following the evil example of the late reign, the minister had exerted himself actively to procure the election of members favourable to the measures about to be brought forward; and there was need of management to gain the consent necessary to carry them into effect; for Mary now laid aside the title of Head of the Church, and Pole, as legate, was introduced to the two houses, and made them a speech on the sin of schism, and the duty of submission to the pope, which was followed by an address from both the houses requesting Mary to re-establish the papal supremacy. An act was speedily passed to secure the due effect to so acceptable a petition; and others, the natural appendages to this, were also enacted, which re-established the old religion in all its ancient forms and powers.

It would have been well if the government had been contented with this; but Spanish ideas now predominated in the queen's councils, and of all the bigots who have disgraced the various forms of religion which they have professed, the Spaniards have, at all times, been the most intolerant and inhuman. The ancient laws against the Lollards, most of which had been repealed in the last reign, were revived, and the flames of persecution were re-kindled in the land, in a degree of which no country in Europe, at that time had afforded any example. It has been questioned whether it is on Gardiner or on Pole that the chief blame of prompting these atrocities should rest. It is certain that the bishop was desirous of establishing the Inquisition in the island; and that persecution commenced while his influence was unimpaired; on the other hand it is equally certain that he exerted himself successfully to save several of the most prominent reformers;* that the executions were continued with greatly increased severity and barbarity after his death; and that the language which, in the later years of Mary's reign, the cardinal held in public on the duty of exterminating heretics far exceeded in its violence anything that was

* Especially Peter Martyr and Roger Ascham, Hook ii. 307. Gardiner died, Nov. 1555. It is remarkable that in 1557 the pope recalled Pole's commission as legate, and indirectly accused him of heresy. Pole died the same day as Mary herself.

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ever imputed to the bishop. He told the citizens of London that "there were no thieves, no murderers, no adulterers so pernicious as heretics; nor any kind of treason to be compared to theirs." While even his fury against them was far exceeded by that displayed by Bonner, bishop of London, who took a fiendish delight in the sufferings of his victims, which has made him an object of abhorrence even to those of his own religion. But in truth Mary herself needed little prompting. Besides a deep attachment to every one of the Romish doctrines, she had the same idea of her title to enforce compliance with her own commands or wishes that had animated her father. If as a papist she looked on the persecution of all who disbelieved the pope's exposition of religion as a duty, as a queen she looked on the enforcement of obedience to her own edicts as a right; and of rights and duties she was equally disinclined to sleep over the exercise. We will not dwell on the details of this miserable persecution, in which nearly 300 persons, among whom were numbered many of the most learned and virtuous ecclesiastics in the kingdom, were burnt alive, for no other crime than that of differing from the queen and her advisers in the form of their religion. The extreme old age of Latimer, the personal kindness which Ridley had perseveringly shown to Bonner's mother, could not save them from the flames; though the constancy with which they and the rest of their fellow-martyrs bore their sufferings, probably encouraged more imitators than their agony deterred; and, in the prophetic words of Latimer, kindled such a torch in England as has not yet been, and we may feel assured never will be, extinguished.

Personal feelings of resentment on the part of the queen against the man whom she regarded as one of the principal agents in her mother's divorce, probably lent additional firmness to her resolution that the archbishop himself should be the crowning victim. Cranmer had every virtue but firmness; but unhappily there is no quality so indispensable to a public man; none of which the absence, if it be absent, is so conspicuous, or of which the want exposes him to such pitiless reprehension. On more than one occasion, in the reigns of Henry and Edward, his want of resolution had suffered him to consent to measures which he knew to be wrong; and now, when deprived of those fellow-sufferers and advisers, whose exhortations might have given him courage, he was unable to face unshrinkingly the prospect of the most agonizing of deaths, and, in the vain hope of saving his life, he recanted, and signed a formal and positive denial of the truths which he had long taught, and which he still believed to be undeniable. Those who reproach his memory with the bitterness with which some have permitted themselves to speak of him should feel very sure that, if

exposed to similar temptations, and threatened by similar agonies, they themselves would escape a similar downfall. Those who doubt themselves, and very few can fail to do so, will rather remember his learning, his wisdom, his real piety, his unfeigned repentance, and, attributing his sin to the infirmities of our common nature, will still cherish his memory as that of him to whom, more than to any one other person, we owe the preservation of the pure apostolic form of worship, which still distinguishes our national Church. On the day appointed for his death, March 20th, 1556, he was brought into St Mary's Church, at Oxford, in which city he had long been kept a prisoner, and exhorted to confirm his recantation to the people. But strength returned to him in his last moments as it did to Samson; and the very horrors of his situation giving him unwonted energy, he publicly owned the sin of which he had been guilty, asked pardon for it of the people and of God, and, when bound to the stake, thrust his hand boldly into the flames as the member which, by signing his recantation, had chiefly offended, and held it there with heroic firmness till it was consumed.

Gardiner had died some months before; and, about the same time, Charles V., finding his health decaying, resigned the crown of Spain to Philip. The French government, who saw this accession of power to their greatest enemy with natural reluctance, attempted to counteract it by exciting another conspiracy in England, of which the avowed object was to depose Mary, and to place Elizabeth on the throne. It was betrayed; those of the conspirators who were unable to escape were executed, and Elizabeth, herself, though there are no grounds for thinking that she was in the slightest degree acquainted with the design, was in some danger of a similar fate; but on this occasion there is reason to believe that she was saved by the interposition of Philip himself, not, as we may fairly suppose, from any particular regard to mercy or justice, which had seldom influence over his unfeeling heart, but because her death would leave the queen of Scots the heiress to the throne, who was on the point of being married to the dauphin; and Philip was as unwilling to see England united to France, as the French could be to see it connected in a similar manner with Spain.

For, though Mary buoyed herself up with hopes of an heir, Philip had ceased to indulge any such expectations; and, in 1556, he left the kingdom for some time to take possession of his new inheritance. Much as he was disliked, the queen became still more unpopular after his departure. Even the Roman Catholics themselves beheld the persecution of the reformers with horror and disgust; and all classes were united in feelings of discontent by

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the arbitrary manner in which she extorted loans and benevolences, without the consent of parliament, to support her husband in the foreign wars, that exhausted even the vast treasures which America was pouring into the Spanish harbours.

He returned in March, 1557, but had scarcely landed before two more attempts to dethrone the queen were made by some of those who, after the last conspiracy, had found a refuge in France. One was betrayed at the very commencement, but the second was carried so far by Thomas Stafford, the second son of lord Stafford, that he actually landed with a French and Scotch force on the Yorkshire coast, seized Scarborough Castle, and issued a formal proclamation against the queen's government. He was soon taken and executed; and the notoriety of the assistance which Henry II. had lent him facilitated the wish of Philip to involve England in his quarrel with France.

In June war was declared against that country, and an English force, which was sent to join Philip's army, bore a share in the decisive victory of St. Quentin, which was gained over the constable Montmorenci in the autumn. But in the winter the loss sustained on that field was partly avenged on the English by the capture of Calais, which was attacked by the duke de Guise on New Year's Day, and surrendered in three weeks, after having belonged to England for upwards of two centuries.

In reality the loss of the town was a gain to England. The commercial advantages derived from its possession were unimportant; the cost of its defence was great; and its retention undoubtedly kept alive the feelings of irritation and enmity between the two countries; but the national pride was severely wounded by its reduction, and Mary shared it so far as to declare, on more than one occasion, that when she died the loss of Calais would be found engraved upon her heart.

That event was nearer at hand than she expected. She again cherished hopes of presenting the kingdom with an heir; but the symptoms which she mistook for those of pregnancy turned out to be dropsical, and the medicines which she took under the mistaken view of her complaint in which she persisted, were in the last degree injurious to her. When her hopes were dispelled, and her imminent danger revealed to her, she prepared for death with resignation; and the only subjects on which she betrayed anxiety were, that her sister would be kind to her old servants, and would preserve the old religion. On the 17th of November she died, and on the evening of the same day cardinal Pole, her most trusted minister since the death of Gardiner, also expired.

She was but forty-two years of age, and she had reigned not quite five years and a half. She was not devoid of good qualities.

She was kind to her dependents; she displayed eminent good sense, courage, and presence of mind in times of rebellion and peril; and she was firmly attached to what she believed to be the true interests of her country. The unparalleled persecution of the Protestants, which she sanctioned, has left an indelible reproach upon her memory; yet she was not naturally cruel, but at first only too easily led by the suggestions of designing and cruel men. Still the facility with which she suffered herself to be led into such atrocities was disgraceful in a sovereign, and revolting in a woman. The barbarities practised had not even the tyrant's worst justification, success. They disgusted more than they terrified. They failed at the time to check the progress of the Reformation, and the recollection of them is probably to this day not without its effect in contributing to the general hatred with which the papal religion is regarded in these islands.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ELIZABETH.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Ferdinand		Henry II.		Paul IV.	
Maximilian II.	1564	Francis II.	1559	Pius IV.	1559
Rudolph	1576	Charles IX.	1569	Pius V.	1565
		Henry III.	1574	Gregory XIII.	1572
		Henry IV.	1589	Sextus V.	1585
<i>Scotland.</i>				Urban III.	1590
Mary.		<i>Spain.</i>		Gregory XIV.	1590
James VI.	1587	Philip II.		Innocent IX.	1591
		Philip III.	1598	Clement VIII.	1591

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1558.



HE accession of Elizabeth was hailed with satisfaction by almost all classes of her subjects. The most patriotic of the Roman Catholics had seen with concern and indignation the loss of Calais, and the depreciation of the renown of their country in the eyes of foreigners; and many, even of those who were most firmly attached to their religion, had witnessed with horror the unprecedented cruelties exercised on the supporters of the new forms, while the reformers indulged a sanguine confidence that, in spite of her conformity to

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the Roman Catholics during her sister's reign, she would be found in her heart to prefer their doctrines to those of their rivals, and would at least deliver them from persecution, if she did not re-establish their superiority. In their estimate of her religious opinions they were to a great degree mistaken. For on nearly all the important points of difference between the Roman Catholics and the Reformers she preferred the old to the new doctrines; as she showed when, the next year, while entertaining a proposal of marriage from one of the Austrian archdukes, she restored the crucifix in the Chapel Royal; and caused the mass again to be celebrated there with all the old formalities. But throughout her whole reign, political considerations predominated over religious ones even in matters of religion: and she saw from the first that her own position as queen depended on the establishment of the doctrines of the Reformation.

It is true that, in legal strictness, her title to the throne arose from her father's will; but, in the general feelings of the people, it depended on her rights as his legitimate daughter; and the question of her legitimacy turned entirely on the point whether the spiritual supremacy in the kingdom belonged to the sovereign or to the pope, who denied the legality of her mother's marriage. She, therefore, at once began to break off all connexion with that potentate, released all those who were imprisoned for their religion, recalled the exiles, and, as soon as parliament met, she caused the laws of Edward VI. concerning religion to be re-enacted, with some slight exceptions and modifications. Even before the meeting of the houses, she had been crowned at Westminster Abbey by Oglethorpe, bishop of Carlisle; the archbishop of York, to whom, in the vacancy of the see of Canterbury, that duty would have belonged, refusing to officiate from dissatisfaction with the inclination which she had already displayed to restore the English liturgy. The primacy was vacant by the death of Pole, who had succeeded Cranmer, and Parker, a man of great learning and exemplary character, who had formerly been her own tutor, was appointed to that now more than ever important charge. At the same time, besides Elizabeth's own prepossessions in favour of the Romish doctrines, there were serious difficulties in the way of establishing a different system, from the fact that a very large proportion of the nation, (some believed as many as three fourths, and by no calculation less than two-thirds of the whole people,) clergy as well as laity, shared these prepossessions. But again, other considerations than those of religion influenced even those who held such opinions. In the first place, a large majority of them regarded the late persecutions with as great horror as the Protestants did: and in the second place, they could not but con-

fess to themselves that a maintenance of the old religion would tend to the continuance of that Spanish influence over the affairs of this country which all thought unworthy and pernicious. No one felt these difficulties so strongly as Elizabeth herself, and the perplexity which they caused her showed itself in strange inconsistencies of conduct. Even in consenting to the Act of Supremacy she refused the title of Head of the Church, contenting herself with claiming the supreme authority in all matters ecclesiastical as well as civil. And presently on matters of doctrine she showed a decided inclination to undo all that had been done. The Act had hardly passed when she re-established the crucifix in the performance of the mass in the Chapel Royal. More than once she permitted persons notoriously in her confidence to hold out to Philip the hope that she would formally restore the old religion in all its fulness. On one occasion she insulted the dean of St. Paul's in his pulpit for denouncing image worship, and to the end of her life she treated with contumely all the clergy who had wives, not sparing even her own favourite, the irreproachable Parker. Her real belief and principle of government seemed to be, as her father's had been, that she had a right to impose her own opinions, however inconsistent or contradictory or vacillating they might be, on all her subjects.

At first Elizabeth retained in their offices the principal councillors of her sister; but, as they were all Roman Catholics, she added others who were known or believed to be more inclined to the doctrines of the Reformation; the chief of whom were sir Nicholas Bacon, to whom she committed the seals as lord keeper, and sir W. Cecil, whom she restored to the office of secretary of state, which he had held under Edward, and who continued till his death, forty years afterwards, to be the minister in whom she placed her chief confidence. She had had continual recourse to his advice in the difficult circumstances in which she had often found herself placed in the reign of Mary; and had learnt to conceive a high opinion of his judgment, prudence, and fidelity to her interests. That opinion, during a longer tenure of power than has ever fallen to the lot of any minister in Europe, he never forfeited; but his previous career had scarcely given promise of the consistency and honesty which distinguished his long and prosperous administration.

He was now thirty-eight years of age, and had owed his rise (for his father was a country gentleman of very moderate fortune) to the penetration and kindness of the protector Somerset; he was in attendance upon him at the battle of Pinkey, and was afterwards made his private secretary: but when Somerset began to yield to the superior influence of Northumberland, Cecil deserted

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if he did not betray him, and attached himself to that ambitious and unprincipled noble as long as his star seemed to be in the ascendant. From him he obtained the honour of knighthood; but, when danger seemed to threaten his fortunes also, the crafty courtier began to keep aloof from his councils. He pretended to be ill; and though his friend, lord Audley, sent him his own family recipe of a hedgehog stewed in rose-water, he could not be recovered sufficiently to bear any share in the dangerous plots of his new patron; and it was only through fear of losing the office of secretary of state, to which he had lately been appointed, that he was induced to add his signature to Edward's will, by which the king appointed the lady Jane the heiress of his kingdom. It cost him many a falsehood and many a meanness to gain his pardon from Mary, though he had made what amends he could by plotting against Northumberland from the first moment that he quitted London to assume the command of the army; and though he was equally prompt in betraying Jane, whose succession he had sworn to promote; putting himself forward as the prime leader of the reaction which so speedily took place in favour of Mary's rightful claims to her inheritance. He could not, however, preserve his office, though he conformed to the Roman Catholic religion, and (except in one instance, when he was provoked into remonstrating in his place in parliament against the encroachments of the pope on the prerogatives of the crown) showed himself in all respects compliant to the will of the reigning sovereign. When he found that, though he had secured himself toleration, he could not expect favour, he retired to his home at Burleigh, and occupied himself in superintending the management of his mother's estate, and in watching with wary eye the events which from time to time clouded and perplexed the political hemisphere. Now, when called to assume a leading share in the government of the state, he applied to the affairs of his new sovereign the same qualities which had preserved himself in safety through the trying vicissitudes which he had experienced, and which had increased the timidity and suspicion which were in some degree natural to his character. He was not a minister of original enterprising genius; but he was perhaps more fitted to guide the vessel of the state in safety through the storms which menaced and the quicksands which surrounded it than if he had been such. His skill lay not so much in forming large and far-sighted plans of general government as in avoiding present dangers: amid such his presence of mind and fertility of resource never failed him; and the stability of Elizabeth's throne and the general success of her government were owing in no small degree to the unfaltering and, at times, unscrupulous discretion with which Cecil picked his way among

difficulties of the most complicated and often of the most opposite character. Cecil had a decided preference for the Protestant religion, leaning indeed rather to the more rigid fashions of the Swiss reformers, who were followed by the English Puritans, than to the slighter deviations from the Roman Catholic worship established by Cranmer; though in this point, his mistress was far from agreeing with him. He had pressed upon her at her accession the necessity of wholly separating from the Romish Church, and he gladly devised measures for carrying his advice into complete effect. The greediness of the courtiers seconded him, for the revenues of the Church were still sufficiently ample to tempt the spoiler. Cecil, whose patrimony had been already increased from that source by his early patron, Somerset, was not averse to still further additions to it; and, during the whole reign, a gradual process continued of alienating the estates of the different chapters or sees, in which the queen at times herself took a prominent part.

Unhappily, the severities which had been exercised towards the reformers, under Mary, inspired them with a desire of retaliation now that they had recovered the upper hand. It was many years before any one was put to death for his religion; but laws of the most unjust and impolitic cruelty, for the suppression of the Roman Catholic religion, were at once enacted. It might have been hoped, it might even have been expected, from persons of such judgment as Elizabeth and Cecil, that they, who had themselves conformed under compulsion, would have learnt, by their own experience, the powerlessness of such constraint to influence the heart; especially as the queen herself had a decided leaning towards many of the principal tenets of the Roman Catholics; and, on the questions of the sacrament, of the use of crosses and images, and of the celibacy of the clergy, certainly preferred their doctrines to those of the reformers; but persecution has seldom, if ever, taught mercy, and, besides the Act of Supremacy which was re-enacted, and which compelled all holders of any preferment or office to renounce the spiritual jurisdiction of the pope, another, called the Act of Uniformity, was also passed, prohibiting, under the most rigorous penalties, the use of any form of worship but that of the newly established liturgy; and this law was enforced with great vigilance; men and even women of high rank and unblemished character were imprisoned for long periods for no other offence than that of hearing mass, or listening to the preaching of a Roman Catholic priest; and, as this severity naturally engendered disaffection towards the government, fresh laws of gradually increasing rigour were from time to time enacted; persons were put to the torture on the mere suspicion of having violated their provisions: at last, in the year 1577, capital punishment began to be inflicted on recusants, and,

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in the course of the next few years, nearly 200 persons were executed for their adherence or return to the Roman Catholic faith ; though an attempt was made, in most cases, to give these executions a political rather than a religious character, by asserting the refusal to disown the papal supremacy to be in itself an act of high treason.

When Elizabeth came to the throne she found war subsisting between France and England ; and Philip, though he was already negotiating for peace, would willingly have continued hostilities, if she would have co-operated with him, and endeavoured to tempt her to such a course by the offer of assisting her to recover Calais. But she discerned the true interest of her country too well to listen to his proposals ; and acceded to the treaty of Chateau Cambresis, on terms which virtually abandoned that town ; and, as Scotland also was included in the peace, she thus restored tranquillity to her dominions, and obtained leisure to direct her whole attention to the improvement of the general welfare of her subjects ; establishing judicious regulations for the encouragement of agriculture, and also for the promotion of trade and commerce ; while, to ensure peace in the most effectual manner by showing herself prepared for war, she introduced the manufacture of gunpowder and cannons, for which the kingdom had hitherto depended on foreign supplies. She built several ships of war, and induced the wealthy merchants and citizens of the principal seaports to do the same.

It has been mentioned that Scotland was included in the peace lately made between England and France ; but, though there was peace between the two countries, there was not friendship between the two queens. Unhappily, two causes combined to render Mary an object of jealousy to Elizabeth ; a feeling which became the parent of a long series of acts of meanness and folly, and at last of cruel injustice and inextinguishable crime. They were first cousins, Mary being the child of Margaret, the eldest daughter of Henry VII., and, in the first place, Elizabeth was jealous of her title to the throne, which, in the eyes of those who maintained the legality of the marriage of Henry VIII. to Catharine of Aragon, was superior to her own ; so that Mary, who was married to the dauphin of France, had, on the accession of Elizabeth, been compelled by her father-in-law to assume the arms and title of queen of England, in retaliation for the adoption by Elizabeth of the title of queen of France. It was true that all the English sovereigns since Henry V. had borne the title of king of France ; but as the Salic law, which incapacitates females from succeeding to the crown, prevails there, it was manifest that Elizabeth could not have been queen of that country, even had her father possessed an actual instead of a

titular sovereignty over it. She was perhaps even more jealous of Mary's beauty. Wise as she was in other respects, she was the slave of the most ceaseless and domineering vanity that ever made a woman ridiculous. Even in the decline of life she issued a proclamation, warning her subjects that no portrait that had ever been painted of her did justice to her beauty; and forbidding any engravings to be sold which might give an inadequate idea of it. In reality, if we may trust the report of the Venetian ambassador, which he certainly did not mean to be unfavourable, she was fine-looking* rather than handsome; and though she certainly would not have coincided in this description, she could not hear without a pang of the unequalled beauty and grace of Mary, of the fascination of her manner and conversation, and of the universal admiration and love which she excited. Unfortunately for her reputation she had many ways of exhibiting the ill feeling which Mary had excited in her breast. She had been but a short time on the throne when Henry II. of France was killed in a tournament; and when Mary's husband, who became king under the title of Francis II. also died in the course of the year 1561, Mary became desirous of returning to her native kingdom. It was in a most disturbed and dangerous state; in no country of Europe had the Reformation produced such violent scenes of discord as in Scotland, under the fanatical guidance of Knox, and the almost equally fierce resistance of those chiefs who adhered to the old religion. At last several of the most powerful nobles, who were attached to the reformed doctrines, formed themselves into an association, to which they gave the title of the Congregation of the Lord, and waged open war against the queen dowager, who governed the kingdom as regent during the minority and absence of Mary. She procured reinforcements from France; but this circumstance furnished the Congregation with a pretext for applying for aid to Elizabeth, who gladly seized the opportunity of interfering in the affairs of Scotland, and at the same time of annoying the rival of whom she was jealous. She assembled an army on the borders; sent a fleet into the Frith of Forth, which laid siege to Leith, forced the French garrison to evacuate it, and compelled the French leaders, acting on behalf of Mary, (for the regent died during the progress of hostilities,) to sign a treaty at Edinburgh, by which they undertook that Mary and her husband should abandon the title of sovereigns of England, and make reparation to Elizabeth for the injury done her by their groundless assumption of it.

Mary, however, evaded the ratification of this treaty, as containing conditions which the French leaders who agreed to it had no authority to make, though she in reality complied with them so

* *Graziosa più che bella.*

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far as to lay aside the title of which Elizabeth complained; and, as Elizabeth feared that the death of Francis might render the English Roman Catholics more inclined to support Mary's claim to the throne, now that there was no longer any danger of its assertion leading to an union with France, she gladly laid hold of the pretext which Mary's evasion afforded her, to carry further her intrigues with the Scottish reformers. So successful in part was she that the Congregation, as the chief body of the Scotch Reformers was called, invited her to accept the crown, proposing even to discard the ancient name of Scotland, and to recognize her as the queen of the united kingdom of great Britain. Such an offer she could not venture to accept, from the certainty that it would involve her in war with France, and perhaps with Spain also. But, even while rejecting it, she could not forbear displaying her personal ill-will to her rival; and when Mary, in preparation for her return to her own country, applied to her for a safe conduct in case she should find it desirable to pass through England on her way, she ungenerously denied it, as a favour which her refusal to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh deprived her of all right to ask, and sent out a fleet to endeavour to intercept her on her passage, which took three of the vessels in attendance on her, though a thick fog protected the queen herself from their attempts. In spite, however, of the indignation which she must have felt at this unprovoked and treacherous act of hostility, Mary, on her arrival among her subjects, found herself so surrounded with difficulties, and perceived that the influence either for good or evil, which Elizabeth had already acquired in her dominions, was so considerable, that she became desirous to bury all previous causes of disagreement in oblivion, and offered at once to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh, if Elizabeth on her part would cause her to be acknowledged as (what in truth she was) the heir to the English throne in the event of Elizabeth's death without issue. Elizabeth's jealousy hindered her from agreeing to this proposal, though its evident reasonableness prevented her from renewing any complaints of Mary on the ground of her refusal to ratify the treaty in question.

It was natural that a princess in the bloom of youth, as Elizabeth then was, (she was just twenty-five years of age at her sister's death), and possessed of so noble an inheritance, should attract the addresses of many suitors. The last honours had scarcely been paid to Mary when Philip offered himself to her acceptance, claiming, however, at the same time an absolute right to dictate to herself and to the whole kingdom in matters of religion; and to exact from her the adoption of every measure which he might judge necessary to compel the obedience of the people; and on these conditions undertaking to procure from the pope a dispensation for a marriage with

his wife's sister. The pope, who maintained the validity of the sanction given by his predecessor to the marriage of Catharine with Henry VIII., could not well have refused to repeat that permission in so similar an instance : but Elizabeth, whose legitimacy depended on the assertion of its invalidity, was of course precluded from admitting that to be lawful in her own case, which she denied to be so in the case of her father ; and Philip soon afterwards married a French princess. Other suitors, however, were proposed against whom there was no such objection. The prince of Sweden, the duke of Holstein, the archduke Charles of Austria, the earl of Arran, (the heir to the crown of Scotland if Mary should die childless,) were all candidates for her hand, with more than one of her own subjects. Elizabeth's vanity was flattered by so many addresses, which she attributed in a great degree to her personal charms ; and her policy made her unwilling to convert any of her suitors into enemies by too positive a rejection of their offers. Cecil wished that her choice might fall on the earl of Arran ; but her own inclinations pointed to lord Robert Dudley, a younger son of the late duke of Northumberland. He had a handsome person, and agreeable, courtly manners ; but in every other respect was the most worthless of mankind. He was destitute of virtue, ability, and even of courage ; yet he had early gained the favourable regard of the queen. One of her first acts of power had been to appoint him her master of the horse ; and she subsequently created him earl of Leicester, and enabled him to support his rank by ample gifts of crown lands. He was married when he first became the object of the Queen's fancy : but, as her infatuation for him increased, there arose a general expectation that he would find means to disembarass himself of a wife who stood in the way of his ambition. In deep concern the ministers spoke of his design to the foreign ambassadors : the poor lady herself suspected it, and took precautions against poison, the mode of murder which she most apprehended. But her death was accomplished in another manner ; and the very day on which the news of the event reached London, Elizabeth spoke openly of her having broken her neck, in language which evinced neither surprise nor sympathy. The foul suspicions of which she soon learned that her husband was the object, seemed in no degree to diminish her attachment to him. She even condescended to make overtures (not altogether unsuccessfully) to the Spanish monarch, and if she did not actually make a promise, at least allowed him to hope that, if he would countenance such a match, she would re-establish the old religion. So imminent appeared the probability of her resolving on such a match, and so discreditable would such a choice have appeared to the world at large, that even Cecil, cautious of giving offence as he

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was, presented a strong memorial to her to dissuade her from it ; not scrupling to allege as one of the objections, the infamy which attached to Dudley from the circumstances of his wife's death ; and at last she abandoned the idea, though her partiality for Dudley continued till his death, and led her not only seriously to damage her own character, but even to sacrifice the welfare of her allies and the safety of her own armies to his cowardice and incapacity.

For a while she seemed to have laid aside all thoughts of marriage, and announced her intention of dying a virgin queen. But such a declaration was supposed to have proceeded rather from affected coyness, than from any serious resolution. Other princes, among whom were the French duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry III., and his younger brother the duke of Alençon, aspired to her alliance, and the archduke Charles more than once renewed his addresses, in which he was supported by Cecil, after the birth of James of Scotland had rendered Arran's chance of succession to that crown more problematical. But Alençon was the suitor to whom she herself, after she had given up all idea of Leicester, seemed most favourable, giving him a ring from her own finger in presence of the court, and making him a large present of money to aid him in his campaign in Flanders, when he was offered the sovereignty of the states which had revolted from Philip. The parliament more than once entreated her to marry, or else to allow a bill to be passed to settle the succession to the crown, and pressed their petition with additional importunity after her life had been threatened by a severe illness ; but, though on one occasion she allowed Cecil to assure the houses that she did mean to marry, they generally only drew upon themselves a severe reprimand for interfering in matters which she asserted to be beyond their province ; and their request, reasonable as it was, was disregarded, for she never did marry, and, to the end of her life, constantly prevented the adoption of any measures which should recognize, or be equivalent to the recognition of, any one as her successor.

In France the death of Francis II. had added fuel to the religious animosities which distracted that country, by throwing the chief power into the hands of Catharine de Medici, as regent for her son Charles IX. ; and, after a short time, both the Roman Catholic and the Huguenot leaders took up arms, and waged open war against each other, in which each party committed almost equal atrocities. The Roman Catholics soon obtained the aid of Philip of Spain, whose ferocious bigotry led him to seek to crush the reformers in every country in Europe ; and the Huguenots in consequence applied to Elizabeth, offering to give her up the town of Havre de Grace if she would assist them. She sent them over a

strong force of 6000 men, and, what she was usually less liberal of, a large supply of money. But the strange events of the war, the leaders on both sides being taken prisoners, after a few months led to a reconciliation between the two factions; and, as she refused to restore Havre, even Condé, the chief of the Protestant party, joined the Roman Catholics in besieging it. Lord Warwick was the governor, with a garrison of above 6000 men. But they were attacked by disease, caused by the vapours arising from the marshes at the mouth of the Seine. Provisions also fell short, and, as the English ministry failed to send him either reinforcements or supplies with the promptitude which the emergency required, he was forced to capitulate, on condition of being permitted to return with his troops to England; and Elizabeth, much chagrined at the result of the enterprise, which had done her no credit, and had not facilitated the recovery of Calais, for which she had hoped to exchange Havre, agreed to a peace with France, which continued unbroken for the remainder of her reign.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ELIZABETH (CONTINUED).

THE marriage of the queen of Scotland was a matter almost as interesting to Elizabeth as her own. The French uncles of the queen of Scots were desirous of her forming some alliance which should strengthen their influence; or, what came to nearly the same thing, be embarrassing to Elizabeth, who was the main support of the opposite party in France; and they proposed, at one time with great apparent probability of success, a match between her and the archduke Charles, who has been already mentioned as one of the suitors of Elizabeth. Elizabeth, being exceedingly unwilling that she should marry any prince possessed of power sufficient to enable her to repress the turbulence of her subjects, and perhaps to become formidable to England, pressed her rather to choose an English nobleman; at last naming Leicester as the one on whom she desired to see Mary's choice fall. Mary was with reason offended at such a proposal, thinking, in the first place, that, if it was made seriously, it was degrading to her, since Leicester's birth was not such as to render him a fit match for a queen; and secondly, that in all probability it was not intended

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to be accepted, since Leicester, as we have seen, was believed to be too much in favour with Elizabeth herself for her to be willing to part with him; and she was led at last by her own inclinations, as well as by the advice of her councillors, to fix on Henry Darnley, the eldest son of the earl of Lennox, a young man of royal descent: in fact he was, after herself, the next heir to the crown of England; while, as he was also an English noble, he seemed to combine every possible recommendation.

Elizabeth, when she heard of Mary's intentions, behaved with even more than her usual duplicity; while she thought it was but a passing fancy she professed to approve of it; but as soon as she found that the queen of Scots had really resolved on it, she endeavoured to throw every possible obstacle in the way; summoned Darnley to return to England, and threw his mother and brother, who happened to be in that kingdom, into prison. The marriage took place in July, 1565, and proved most unfortunate. Darnley was possessed of great personal attractions, but of scarcely any good qualities; he was vain, weak, and vicious, and absurdly jealous, not only of the queen's attachment to him, which at first was certainly sincere, but of her superior abilities. He soon became a tool in the hands of the most violent of the nobles; some of whom were ill-affected towards Mary on account of her religion, and some from the natural turbulence of their disposition. By his misconduct of various kinds, he gradually alienated the queen's affection and changed it into dislike and contempt; and at last, by a crowning act of atrocity, into a settled and unalterable hatred. Mary had a secretary of foreign birth, but of eminent talents, David Rizzio by name, who had gradually become possessed of her entire confidence. He had also, at one time, stood high in the favour of Darnley himself; but after a while, some of those lords who were the chief supporters of the Protestant interest instilled into Darnley's weak mind feelings of jealousy against Rizzio, and persuaded him to consent to his murder, which they perpetrated with every circumstance of aggravation which their cruelty or disloyalty could devise. Mary, who was near her confinement, was sitting at supper with the Italian and some of the ladies of her court, when the conspirators burst into her room, dragged the unhappy secretary from her presence, and despatched him with their daggers. Mary never forgave her husband, whom she looked upon, if not as the chief author of the atrocity, at least as the one whose share in it was the most criminal; nor did even the birth of her son, afterwards James I. of England, revive her affection for his father. An outward show of reconciliation indeed took place, but it was so notorious that it was not real, that his enemies, some provoked by his insolence, and others by the treachery with

which he had sought to throw on them all the blame of the murder of Rizzio, did not scruple to form a most atrocious plot for his destruction, trusting (as it turned out afterwards with only too much accuracy of judgment) that Mary would not punish too severely a deed which relieved her of a husband whom she had learnt to hate and to despise.

It is uncertain who was the original contriver* of the plot. It is certain that the earl of Bothwell bore the principal part in its execution. He was a young noble of fiery energetic character, with a fair reputation for military enterprise and talent; and having lived some time at the French court, he had acquired a tincture of polish and grace, which made him appear to advantage among the rude nobles of his native land, and too effectually recommended him to the queen, who had early learnt to value such accomplishments. The question which has been most agitated and which to this day is discussed by many with some of the interest of living partisanship is, whether Mary had any knowledge of the plot before its execution. At a later period her enemies professed to have discovered letters addressed by her to Bothwell, which contained full proofs of her accession to the plot, but which, if they had been genuine, her champions argue, he would surely have shown at least to earl Morton, who, in his last hours, declared, that though he pressed Bothwell earnestly for one word in writing from the queen, he could not produce one.† While the plot was maturing, Darnley fell sick of small-pox, and his danger appeared to have revived some portion of Mary's affection for him; she nursed him in his illness, brought him to Edinburgh as soon as he was convalescent, and lived with him in a house outside the town, that being a better situation for an invalid than Holyrood Palace. But it was known that she would pass the night of the 9th of February at Holyrood, because she had promised to attend the marriage of a favourite servant there; and that same night the house, in which Darnley lay, was blown up, and his dead body was found at some distance, in such a condition as induced the belief that he had been strangled and removed out of the house before the explosion took place.

* According to the strange fashion of the day a *bond* was drawn up by an eminent lawyer, James Balfour, with formal precision of language, binding the conspirators to execute the deed and to stand by one another. But the document has perished; and we have no certain information who signed it. Aytoun believes that the Queen's illegitimate brother, the earl of Murray, and Maitland of Lethington, were the original contrivers of the murder, and looks upon it as unquestionable that Knox was privy to it. Burton evidently discredits this. But Burton also strives to acquit both Murray and Knox of being privy to the murder of Rizzio, though it is notorious that Knox was extravagant in his eulogy of that crime after it had been committed. The evidence of Murray, at least, having known of the conspiracy to murder Darnley seems almost irresistible.

† In "Mary Queen of Scots and her accusers" Mr. Hosack has established the forgery of some of these letters, by the most conclusive arguments; and has proved that others of the series alleged to have been written by her to Bothwell, were really addressed to Darnley himself. See also *Quarterly Review*, vol. 131, p. 513.

A.D. 1566.

Universal opinion pointed to Bothwell as the murderer; and the earl of Lennox, Darnley's father, openly accused him of it, and wrote to the queen demanding speedy justice. Darnley had proved so unworthy of her love that it was natural that she should feel but little sorrow at his death; but her conduct was now marked by such infatuated folly, (and folly itself is criminality in a ruler of a nation,) that it gave but too much colour to the suspicions of those, and they were many, who believed that she herself had been accessory to the dark deed which had been perpetrated. She allowed Bothwell to remain at liberty, and even to have access to herself; she hurried on the trial, ordering it to take place at the end of a fortnight, and refusing Lennox's application for its postponement; and as, on the appointed day, no accuser appeared, (for Lennox had had no time to collect his proofs,) Bothwell was acquitted, and was immediately selected by Mary as the object of increased honours. It soon appeared that he was destined to strange promotion. Probably not ten persons in all Scotland believed in his innocence, yet a number of the most powerful nobles signed an address to Mary, in which, after mentioning his acquittal, they urged her, for the good of the kingdom, to contract a fresh marriage, and recommended Bothwell as the object of her choice. There can be no doubt that a paper, so disgraceful to those who signed it, never would have been drawn up at all if its purport had not been known to be agreeable to the queen, but, as she thought it seemly or prudent to give an evasive answer, Bothwell, before the end of April, waylaid her on one of her journeys, and carried her by force to Dunbar, where, however, she remained willingly, and after a few days granted him a public pardon for the violence which he had offered her, and created him duke of Orkney.

If any thing could add further disgrace to the shame of this strange series of errors and crimes, it was to be found in the fact that Bothwell was already married; a divorce, however, was readily procured, and, though Elizabeth addressed a strong remonstrance to Mary on the folly of her conduct, and though the French ambassador refused to be present at the ceremony, the marriage of Mary and Bothwell took place on the 15th of May, scarcely more than three months after the murder of Darnley.

Their nuptial joys were rudely interrupted. The reformers gladly availed themselves of the universal disgust which the queen's conduct had excited to raise a confederacy against her, which was speedily joined by many of the most respectable Roman Catholics also, and even by several of those who had joined in recommending Bothwell to her choice. They raised an armed force; the queen also assembled her troops; but, when the two armies met on Carberry Hill, on the 15th of June, only one month after the fatal

wedding-day, Mary discovered that she could no longer trust the loyalty of her soldiers. She was compelled to surrender, and Bothwell to flee. He escaped to Denmark, and Mary was confined in the castle of Lochleven, under the care of lady Douglas, her father's ancient mistress, and the mother of her natural brother, the earl of Murray.

Elizabeth had naturally taken a great interest in these transactions, and, for a while, seemed inclined to act a generous part towards Mary, at whose captivity in the hands of her subjects she, as a queen, felt indignant, and sent sir Nicholas Throgmorton as her ambassador to Scotland, to mediate between her and her rebellious lords. But they were of too fierce a disposition to listen to her remonstrances against their disloyal behaviour, and compelled Mary to sign deeds, abdicating the crown in favour of her son, and appointing Murray regent during his minority. The young prince was crowned in July, under the title of James VI.; but the English ambassador, by Elizabeth's express command, refused to countenance the ceremony by his presence, and Murray returned from France to assume the regency. His authority however, created jealousy, the energy with which he wielded it produced him enemies, and the helpless situation of the queen awakened a sympathy for her even among many of those who had previously taken part against her. She escaped from Lochleven, and was speedily joined by a powerful body of adherents, who quickly raised a force for her defence. But Murray defeated her army at Langside; she fled from the field, and, in spite of the remonstrances of some of her most earnest friends, determined to take refuge in England, a ruinous determination, fatal to her own liberty, ultimately to her life; and equally so to the character of Elizabeth. She believed that she had good reason to rely on the friendship of the English Queen, who had shown great inclination to assist her while in captivity, who had pretended great good will towards her after her escape, and who was also her nearest relation. But Elizabeth, after long and anxious consultation with Cecil, determined on detaining her a prisoner, and caused her to be removed from Carlisle to Bolton, in Yorkshire, refusing her the interview which she requested till she had cleared herself of the charge of accession to her husband's murder. Mary professed her willingness to justify herself to Elizabeth as a kinswoman and a friend, and Elizabeth appointed a commission, at the head of which was the duke of Norfolk, to investigate the case at York; but subsequently she removed it to Hampton Court: there Murray brought forward fresh evidence in support of his accusation of Mary as privy to Darnley's murder, though he had not appeared to be in possession of any such proofs while at York, and Mary, professing to think it derogatory to her

A.D. 1568.

honour to reply to this new evidence, which she asserted to be forged, ordered her commissioners to abstain from saying a word in her defence, but to accuse Murray himself of having been privy to Darnley's murder; in consequence, the examinations were broken off, and Mary was again removed from Bolton to Tutbury, in Staffordshire, where she was committed to the care of the earl of Shrewsbury. The severity, however, with which she was treated did not break her spirit. She steadily refused to surrender her crown, or even to share her authority with her son, as Elizabeth now urged her to do, and demanded permission to quit England, and retire into France, which was resolutely refused.

Many, however, of the English nobles disapproved greatly of the treatment which she received. The earl of Northumberland offered to aid her to escape; and the duke of Norfolk, with the approbation of a large and powerful party of his brother peers, sought her hand in marriage. Leicester, whose influence with Elizabeth was supposed to be paramount, favoured the project: but, in political affairs, the queen was guided rather by the advice of Cecil, who had obtained early information of what was going on, and who foresaw that such a marriage, which would render it impossible to keep Mary any longer in confinement, would be fraught with danger to the tranquillity of the kingdom. By his advice Norfolk was arrested, and committed to the Tower; Mary was removed to Coventry; and the earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland were arrested by the earl of Sussex, governor of the northern counties, in which their influence chiefly lay; but were released from want of evidence of their being implicated in the conspiracy; though, in fact, next to Norfolk, they were the most important members of it.

They had not trusted solely to their own power, considerable as it was, but had entered also into negotiations with the duke of Alva, Philip II.'s governor of the Netherlands, who had promised them some troops, and some of his most skilful officers to aid them, in case they should find it necessary to have recourse to force. Philip himself was inclined to adopt the still more effectual method of procuring Elizabeth's murder: which the pope eagerly recommended to him, declaring that, poor as he was, he would sell the Church plate and even his own robes to provide funds for carrying out so laudable an undertaking. But Alva was too wary and sagacious to believe in the possibility of accomplishing it. He distrusted Norfolk's ability, and even his courage. And in the end the very support which he promised to the other parts of the conspirators' plan proved fatal to its success: since reliance on it led them, on being summoned to appear before the queen, to take arms instead, and they raised an army of nearly 6000 men, with which

they expected to terrify the government into the concession of such measures as they required. Sussex, however, who had great military abilities, easily quelled this premature rising. The leaders escaped into Scotland, but great numbers of prisoners were taken; and the degree of alarm which the outbreak had caused may perhaps be estimated by the unexampled severity of their punishment, not less than 800 persons having been put to death by the hands of the executioner.

It had also led Elizabeth seriously to doubt of the policy of any longer detaining Mary a prisoner, and she first of all began to treat with Murray on the subject of restoring her to her rights in Scotland, or at least allowing her to live there in freedom and safety. But, though it is not likely that negotiations with him would have had any practical result, they were broken off by his assassination, which took place at the beginning of 1570, and Elizabeth then began to treat with Mary herself, sending Cecil to her with offers to aid in her restoration to her throne on certain conditions, to which she, with the approbation of her advisers at the court of France, readily agreed. No part of Elizabeth's conduct to Mary can be justified in respect of either humanity, justice, or consistency; but it is plain that the offers of assistance which she now made her were equivalent to an admission that she did not believe her guilty of any accession beforehand to the murder of her husband; for how could she, with any decency, have aided in the restoration to royal authority of a person stained with such enormous guilt? Though it is true that she was not sincere in her offers, for, at the very time that Cecil was discussing them with Mary, he was also, by her authority, in communication with Lennox, who was now regent of Scotland, encouraging him to persevere in his support of the claims of James in opposition to those of his mother; and the whole negotiation was soon broken off on the most trivial pretences.

At the same time Mary's cause was greatly injured in the eyes of English partisans, by the rash insolence of the pope, Pius V., who, probably with the intention of advancing her claims, issued a bull of excommunication against Elizabeth, in which he professed to absolve her subjects from their allegiance to her; and a man of the name of Felton was found audacious enough to affix the bull to the palace of the bishop of London, for which he was very properly executed, as guilty of high treason. But Norfolk had been too strongly tempted by the prospect of obtaining Mary for his wife to abandon such a hope easily; and, after a time, finding that he had apparently no chance of being restored to Elizabeth's favour, he renewed his negotiations with her and her friends, and was desperate enough to treat also with the duke of Alva, agreeing to aid him in

A.D. 1572.

an invasion of England, which, taking Elizabeth by surprise, would, he thought, compel her to agree to all his proposals. He was betrayed, however, by his own servants, brought to trial, and convicted on the clearest evidence; and though Elizabeth delayed for a while the execution of his sentence, in June, 1572, he paid the penalty of his treason on Tower Hill.

I have mentioned all these events in one unbroken narrative, on account of their connexion with the queen of Scots. But, during the years which they occupied, others also took place of great political interest, and also strikingly illustrating both the personal character of Elizabeth, and her system of government. The news of the birth of the young prince of Scotland appeared to cause her great mortification; and she more than once complained that the queen of Scots had a fair son, while she herself was but a barren stock. At the same time it made the parliament more eager than ever to have the succession to the crown placed on a firm footing; and on one occasion they endeavoured to compel the queen to gratify their wishes by coupling the question of the succession to a grant of supply. She at first took a high tone, and forbade the members to discuss such questions. But Paul Wentworth, an honest and fearless member of the lower house, expressed a doubt whether it became parliament to attend to any such prohibition; and his remarks were so favourably received by his brother members that the queen thought it best to revoke her prohibition, and to inform the parliament that they were at liberty to debate the matter. It is this accurate appreciation of the temper of her time and of her people, that constitutes the peculiar wisdom of Elizabeth's government. Burke, the most philosophical of statesmen, has laid it down that, "If there is any one eminent criterion which above all the rest distinguishes a wise government from an administration weak and improvident, it is this,—Well to know the best time and manner of yielding what it is impossible to keep." And another most sagacious and judicious observer of history,* speaking with reference to this particular reign, points out further, that "Elizabeth always gave way in time to render her concessions a favour." Having quite as high notions of her royal prerogative, and a disposition quite as arbitrary and severe as her father, she always desired and very frequently attempted to limit the power of the parliament. She assembled it very rarely, sometimes allowing several years to elapse between its different meetings. More than once she positively prohibited the members from discussing matters of state. At other times she forbade them to discuss the affairs of Scotland, or of religion. She ordered one member of the house of commons, for making a motion against some monopolies which she

* Professor Smythe.

had granted, to be summoned before her council, and reprimanded for his disloyalty ; and another, by her own authority, she forbade to appear any more in his place in the house ; some she even imprisoned. Sometimes the servility of the members kept pace with her own domineering will ; but, as often as her commands or prohibitions excited a spirit of discussion and strong remonstrance, she revoked them before they could lead to resistance, and usually with such gracious expressions as made her concession bear a greater appearance of condescension and beneficence, than her previous imperiousness had worn of illegality and tyranny.

Many of those who gave her the greatest offence by the freedom with which they brought forward measures displeasing to her, and invaded the authority which she wished to assert, were also offensive to her on religious grounds, entertaining, as they did, a strong prejudice in favour of that more austere form of the Reformation which prevailed in the districts where Calvin's influence predominated. Their religious bias was believed to be shared by Cecil, Walsingham, and others of Elizabeth's most trusted ministers ; though the notions of political equality which many of them were beginning to deduce from their doctrines of ecclesiastical government, were as distasteful to the nobles as to the queen.

The divisions in Scotland, fomented as they were by Elizabeth, added further complications to the affairs of Ireland. After the decisive lesson of England's superior power, which the overthrow of Fitzgerald's rebellion had afforded, Ireland had been, comparatively speaking, quiet during the remainder of Henry's reign ; and after the accession of Edward, a new Deputy, sir Edward Bellingham, a man of great capacity for government, not only by his vigour and firmness bridled the chieftains who at first showed an inclination to try whether the infancy of the new king might not afford them an opportunity of disturbing the tranquillity to which they were so unaccustomed, and which they found so irksome ; but even inspired them and such of their followers as were capable of reasoning on the course of events, with a confidence in the justice and friendliness of England, which it was hoped, might have laid a permanent foundation for a better state of things. But after a couple of years the fluctuations of party intrigue in the English government led to his recall ; presently the religious animosities between those who sought to establish the new religion and those who professed adherence to the old forms, spread to that island also ; Edward's ministers established the Reformation ; Mary re-established Popery ; and amid the dissensions caused by these precipitate changes, the law naturally became weaker, and the factious and rebellious spirit of the Irish chieftains broke out more dangerously than ever ; and after Mary's death, derived additional encouragement from their

A.D. 1562.

finding that the English government had never been weaker than during the beginning of the reign of her successor. That it was so, as far as Ireland was concerned, was greatly owing to the personal qualities of Elizabeth herself; to her apparently constitutional irresolution and vacillation; to her incurable parsimony, always most predominant at the most unfit season; and to her equally inveterate caprice, which led her, perhaps from an unwillingness to appear to owe too much to her servants, whether ministers or soldiers, at all times to treat the most deserving of them with injustice and slight, in exact proportion to the ability and fidelity with which they served her. These faults were especially dangerous when, as happened now, she had to deal with a man who to the ferocity and unscrupulousness of his brother chieftains added a degree of cunning and address of which they had shown no instance. Shan O'Neill, as the man was named, whom the O'Neills now acknowledged as their head, had the sagacity to court the protection and assistance of the kings of Spain and France, and even the skill to gain allies more able to render him real service among the Scottish chieftains, working upon some of them, such as the earl of Argyle, so successfully, that, though he had personally insulted the earl by carrying off his half-sister from her husband, and compelling her to live with him as his mistress, Argyle, nevertheless, prepared to invade Ulster in order to aid him to establish his independence. Elizabeth, on her accession, had found the earl of Sussex in authority as Deputy; but Sussex, though brave and loyal, had but little statesman-like talent; O'Neill ravaged with impunity the whole of the northern districts; even the Pale was in a state of daily increasing decay, helplessness, and distress. At last he broke out in open rebellion; defeated Sussex; took and destroyed Armagh; and then had the effrontery to open a negotiation with Elizabeth, begging she would give him an English wife of noble birth, and make him lord Deputy in place of Sussex; in which case he undertook within three years to make the country, which hitherto had caused nothing but loss to the English exchequer, produce her a revenue.

None of the proceedings of Elizabeth's earlier years reflect greater discredit on her than those connected with Ireland and O'Neill. Deeply stained with every crime as she knew him to be, she sent him a pardon, with a safe conduct to visit London and confer with herself. At the same time she approved of a proposal made to her by Sussex, to bribe one of his own servants to assassinate him: when the servant proved too faithful or too timorous, Sussex tried to kidnap him, sending over to England for his sister as willing to be the bride of whom O'Neill was ambitious, thinking to tempt him to Dublin to pay his court to her, and then to seize and im-

prison him; and when that project failed, he subsequently once more tried assassination; contriving to have a cask of poisoned wine sold to him; which, however, was so unskillfully medicated that it only produced illness, not death. Strange to say, O'Neill, though by no means ignorant of the plots which had been laid against him, in 1562 did visit Elizabeth at her court; and, though she had contemplated breaking her safe conduct on the plea that, although she had promised that he should be allowed to return in safety, it had not fixed the time at which she would grant this permission, she at last granted him not only a complete pardon, but conferred on him the dignity of captain of Tyrone, with feudal jurisdiction and power which, if it was not nominally absolute, he well knew how to make really so, over the whole of the northern counties. She even allowed him to nominate the primate, as the archbishopric of Armagh was vacant. But with all this show of mutual confidence both were equally insincere; it was after his return from England that the poisoned wine was sent to him, and he was treating more eagerly than ever with French, Spaniards, Scots; with every one who had cause to hate or distrust Elizabeth. Fortunately for England, the worthless and incompetent Leicester had a brother-in-law of virtue and great ability, sir Henry Sidney, who possessed also a personal knowledge of Ireland, having had a command there under lord Sussex. In 1566 he was sent over as lord Deputy; and in little more than a year he succeeded in crushing the enemy, who would otherwise, in his opinion, have succeeded in wresting the whole island from the English crown. To see the magnitude of the crisis as Sidney saw it, and as no one before him had seen it, was a great step towards mastering it. He saw also the only way to deal with it; campaigns in Ireland had hitherto borne rather the appearance of brief plundering excursions than any regular operations of war. Sidney resolved when he had once taken the field, to keep it till his work was done. And he carried out his design in spite of difficulties from home more embarrassing and more provoking than the worst which confronted him in Ireland. Elizabeth refused him money either to maintain his troops or to pay their arrears; she reproached him for wanting money with mean and unworthy suspicion; she sent another officer to control his expedition, a great part of which was provided for out of his own patrimony; he began to be successful; she maligned him behind his back to her flattering courtiers in London. She was even offended that, in a lawsuit which arose between the Ormonds and the Desmonds, he would not strain the laws to procure an unrighteous decision in favour of the side which she desired to protect. Wearied with, and justly indignant at her continued ill-treatment, he at last demanded his recall. Luckily her council knew his value

A.D. 1575

better than she could feel it ; and at last they succeeded in overruling her weakness and her wilfulness, and sent him what he required. O'Neill became desperate ; he saw that before such a man properly supplied, he could only fail. He tried treachery ; Sidney's caution baffled it : he tried force ; to be defeated at Dundalk and at Derry. His followers, many of whom had been but unwilling allies, began to fall off. Others prepared in secret to avenge the injuries which at different times he had done their families. Sidney traversed and retraversed the whole of Ulster in triumph. And his last victory was decisive ; its exact place is unknown ; but the result is certain ; of nearly three thousand men who remained to O'Neill, all but a handful either fell in the fight, or fled from his standard for ever. Before the end of the week the Scotch murdered him and nearly all his Irish followers. And his overthrow, which placed the greater part of Ulster at the disposal of the English government, led to the formation of plans for the colonisation, as it may fairly be called, of that province ; and which, though subsequently postponed for a time, were, to a great extent, carried out in the next reign ; and which may almost be said to be the only design ever formed, with respect to Ireland, which bore any permanent fruit.

Elizabeth had always taken a great interest in the affairs of the Continent ; but when the cruelties which the duke of Alva perpetrated in Flanders against all who favoured the Reformation, drove many of the natives of that country from their homes, she encouraged them to settle in England ; and, as the Flemings were, at that time, the most skilful artisans in Europe in many manufactures and arts, their settlement in England proved a great and permanent advantage ; while so great was the gratitude that the inhabitants of those provinces felt towards her, that, in 1575, they actually, by the advice of the Prince of Orange, offered her the sovereignty over the two important provinces of Zealand and Holland. Elizabeth was in some perplexity. The proposal afforded a tempting opportunity for inflicting a deep wound on the tyrant who had not scrupled to plot her own assassination. But while she hated Philip she feared him. Her niggardly spirit too, was alarmed at the expenditure in which her acceptance of the proposal would involve her ; and in the end the baser motives prevailed. She replied to the Dutch envoys that " it would be too expensive to her to assume the protection of the provinces," though she promised to use her endeavours to prevail on Philip to restore them to their ancient privileges, and to cease to treat them as revolted subjects, pursuing them with a war which threatened to become one of extermination. And subsequently, when her attempt had failed, she agreed to lend them a small body of troops, on con-

dition that they would render her a like assistance if ever she should require it, and that the whole cost of the pay and maintenance of the soldiery should be borne by the Dutch. In fact, throughout her whole reign most unprincely parsimony influenced her actions at least as much as any higher considerations. The expenditure in which even her limited undertakings in the Netherlands involved her were intolerable to her, and made her unjust to all whom she employed, whether generals, ministers, or even her favourite Dudley; till, at last, she even showed a willingness to abandon the whole country to Philip's fury, if he would have repaid her the sums which she had disbursed in their cause.

With the French court she carried on long and intricate negotiations, giving Charles IX. hopes that she would still agree to the marriage with the duke of Anjou; and seeking to persuade him to more conciliatory measures towards the Protestants, (whom at the same time she was secretly encouraging in their opposition to the court,) till at last, in the spring of 1572, she concluded a defensive alliance with France, which she expected to find of great importance in the event of a war with Spain, of whose unchangeable enmity she felt fully assured.

But her conduct with respect to the French Huguenots did little credit to either her sincerity or humanity. In the August of the same year the atrocious massacre of the Protestants took place, which excited a general feeling of horror in every Protestant state in Europe, and which many Roman Catholics also viewed with almost equal detestation. No one, however, expressed less disapprobation of the act than Elizabeth, and even the moderate censure which she did pronounce upon it to the French ambassador, appeared to proceed rather from a wish to save appearances, than from the genuine feelings of her heart, for she did not in the least abate her partiality for the French alliance. Though the idea of her marriage with the duke of Anjou had been abandoned, she entertained fresh proposals from his brother, the duke of Alençon, who succeeded to the title of Anjou when the elder prince became king of Poland, with increasing cordiality; and before the end of the year she sent an ambassador to France, to assist at the baptism of a daughter of Charles IX., to whom she became godmother. At the same time she contrived to persuade the Huguenots that she was eager to support them; she negotiated with Henry, king of Navarre, who was now their chief leader; and aided him with her influence, and with some money to levy the troops, with whom he continued to make head against the court, and against the league which the abilities of the duke of Guise had formed, and which aimed at the utter destruction of the reformed party throughout the French dominions.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ELIZABETH (CONTINUED).

IN 1579, fresh causes of discontent arose between England and Spain; Francis Drake having obtained the queen's consent to conduct an expedition into the Pacific Ocean, attacked the Spanish possessions in those quarters, took several Spanish ships, and returned home loaded with booty, much of which found its way into the royal treasury. The Spanish ambassador made a formal complaint to her of these transactions, which he stigmatized as piratical, and Elizabeth condescended to restore some of the booty; but, at the same time, she showed her approbation of Drake's conduct by visiting him on board the ship in which he had, in this expedition, sailed round the world, and conferring on him the honour of knighthood. The king of Spain attempted to retaliate by sending a body of Spanish troops to aid the disaffected Irish; but they were forced to surrender, and Philip began to prepare for a more effectual display of his hostility.

The long confinement of the queen of Scotland, which, from time to time, increased in severity, gave rise to many projects for her deliverance, which were the cause of great disquietude to Elizabeth; and, as they were chiefly entertained by Roman Catholics, they furnished a pretext for fresh persecutions of all who adhered to that sect. The parliament, many of the ablest and most energetic members of which, as has already been said, inclined to the puritan doctrines, were eager to gratify all the queen's wishes on that subject; passing an act to banish all popish priests from the kingdom, and entirely to suppress every exercise of the Roman Catholic religion. Under this iniquitous law, numbers of persons were put to death, though an attempt was made to represent these executions as if the victims were condemned not so much for their religion as for treasonable practices, of which, however, no proof was attempted to be given; and, to give a further colour to this pretence, the punishment of the gallows was generally substituted for that of the stake.

Nor did the puritan party fare much better than the Roman Catholics. Archbishop Grindal, who succeeded Parker, had protected them as far as he could, because he had himself a leaning to their doctrines; but in 1583, he died, and the new archbishop,

Whitgift, was as little inclined to show them mercy as the queen herself. She looked upon them as enemies to the authority of kings, he hated them as being, what indeed they avowed themselves, contemners of his order, and desirous to suppress the episcopate, or, till that could be done, at all events, to confine the power of bishops within the narrowest limits; and he easily induced her to establish a new ecclesiastical commission, with power to enforce the most rigid uniformity, and to inflict on all suspected persons the tortures of the rack, ruinous penalties, or protracted imprisonment.

The Puritans suffered in silence; but the Roman Catholics, more under the dominion of the priesthood, who taught that the end justified the means, were, in more than one instance, stimulated to endeavour to deliver their brethren from the persecution to which they were subjected, by the assassination of the queen; and one plot set on foot with that object by a man named Parry was especially remarkable, both because Parry was himself a man of property and education, and a member of parliament, and also because he had consulted the pope's nuncio and one of the cardinals on the lawfulness of his enterprise, and had received from them the warmest encouragement. His design, however, was betrayed, and he was convicted and executed; but his and similar crimes created an apparent justification of the severities exercised by Elizabeth towards the Roman Catholics, which was eagerly put forward by the ministers and the archbishop, and acquiesced in by those who did not consider that in fact the treason had been provoked by the persecution.

The remonstrances which Elizabeth had addressed to Philip had not been productive of any benefit to the Flemings, who now besought her to accept the sovereignty of the whole country; an offer which she again refused, but made a fresh treaty with them, and agreed to send them over a very considerable force both of infantry and cavalry; though she rendered this aid almost useless by placing it under the command of Leicester. Some time before he had nearly lost her favour, when Simier, an agent of the duke of Anjou, revealed to her that he was secretly married to the widow of the earl of Essex: she threatened to send him to the Tower, and he, in revenge, tried to procure the assassination of Simier, till the queen gave public notice that she had taken the Frenchman under her protection; but he had gradually recovered all his ascendancy over her, and now he obtained this important command, for which his unfitness was rendered more glaring by the circumstance of his being opposed to the duke of Parma, a man possessed of consummate skill, both as a politician and as a general. Yet his appointment was not the worst part of Elizabeth's misconduct in the matter. Had his skill been ever so great it must have been

A.D. 1582.

neutralised by her parsimony, which refused the supplies necessary to maintain his troops in efficiency, and even in life. Though they were within twenty-four hours' sail of her own coast she allowed one half of them to perish of actual want; nor could the most earnest representations of the fearful destitution to which they were reduced, wring a penny from her hands, though Leicester himself protested to her that they "were perishing for want of victuals and clothing in great numbers;" and, what could hardly have surprised her, that those who survived were on the point of mutiny. With forces in such a condition he could, of course, effect nothing; and the only enterprise which he did attempt proved not only a failure but a disaster. False information had led him to believe it possible to cut off a convoy of provisions which Parma had prepared for the relief of Zutphen, a town in Gelderland, and a chosen body of knights gladly undertook the exploit. But the Spanish escort proved far stronger than had been expected: a strong body of cavalry was supported by 4000 infantry, on whom the English, though charging with a gallantry not outshone in any action of the age, could make no impression. They were beaten back with hardly an effort: and among the killed was sir Philip Sidney, Leicester's nephew, who was accounted the very flower of English chivalry, and in every respect one of the most virtuous and accomplished knights in Europe. Having disgusted the Flemings by his insolence almost as much as he had disappointed them by his incapacity, Leicester returned to England, and about the same time Drake also returned from a second expedition against the Spanish possessions in America, in which he had taken several important towns, and collected a vast booty.

The queen had not treated James of Scotland with more friendship than she had shown to his unhappy mother. Mary had, with some truth, affirmed that all the troubles of her reign had been owing to the intrigues of Elizabeth, and these intrigues were now steadily directed against the young prince. In 1582, Elizabeth had countenanced the violence of lord Gowry and others, when, in order to break the power of Lennox and Arran, his chief ministers, they seized him by force, and kept him for some time in close confinement: three years later she endeavored to procure from some of the most powerful of his nobles a promise to prevent his marriage; and it is even said that her ambassador, sir Edward Wotton, treated with some of the disaffected lords to deliver up James to Elizabeth, that he too might be kept in confinement similar to that of his mother.

Little as was the affection that James, one of the worst and meanest princes who has ever sullied the kingly dignity, showed towards his mother, Mary had always regarded him with the most

tender affection, and when she heard of his captivity and detention in the hands of his rebellious nobles, she wrote a pathetic letter to Elizabeth, imploring her to interpose for his deliverance; but James found means to escape without the intervention of the queen of England; and though he was aware of all her plots against him, he, in 1586, made an offensive and defensive alliance with her, in the hope that this union would facilitate his succession to her throne at her death, and probably expecting also to have her support in the event of his being compelled to engage in any open struggle with the presbyterian clergy, who were daily becoming more insolent in their language, and more dangerous in their designs.

Elizabeth, however, had a different reason for wishing to entangle James in her trammels. She had resolved to put his mother to death; and, as a prelude to such an atrocious act, she had for some time been gradually increasing the rigour of her treatment. She had transferred her to the custody of harsher keepers; and one of those to whose care she was now committed, sir Amias Paulet, took every opportunity of insulting her; wearing his hat in her presence; removing the canopy which, as a mark of her royal dignity, had been erected in her sitting-room; and curtailing her ordinary amusements. The iniquity of the treatment to which Mary was thus subjected, while it excited, as we have already said, many, especially amongst the Roman Catholics, to form plots for her deliverance, even if they could only be brought to a successful result by the death of her oppressor, also induced Mary to lend a willing ear to any projects for her own release, though the most dispassionate inquirers admit that it does not appear that she ever gave her consent to any that involved danger to the life of Elizabeth.* It would not have been strange if she had countenanced plots even against her life: the laws of every country sanction the very utmost efforts that men illegally detained make for the recovery of their liberty, and the detention of no one had ever been marked with greater illegality and treachery in its commencement, with more falsehood and cruelty in its continuance, than that of Mary. When she first set foot in Elizabeth's dominions she was in no respect subject to her, nor was it for a moment pretended that she had committed any crime against her. On the contrary, she came into England invested with every character that might have seemed best calculated to secure for her Elizabeth's sympathy and succour. As a queen flying from her

* Hallam (*Eng. Const. Hist.*, c. lii.) admits that "these proofs are not perhaps complete," in a chapter expressly devoted to the exculpation of Elizabeth; and Lord Campbell (*Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. ii., p. 126) expresses his firm conviction that nothing had been revealed to Mary beyond "the plan to liberate herself from imprisonment," she being "by no means aware of the intention to assassinate Elizabeth." Some, however, of the documents more recently produced by Mr. Froude were unknown to both these writers.

A D. 1586.

rebellious subjects she might well have reckoned on the support of a sister sovereign, especially of one who held kingly authority so sacred; as a cousin, she might have looked for the affection of her nearest kinswoman; as a brave, high-spirited woman, who had struggled boldly, though unsuccessfully, against some of the fiercest of the other sex, she might have looked for the cordial sympathy of one who herself never wanted courage to confront and resolution to subdue dangers. It is true that she had not always been prudent; that she had committed one great crime in marrying Bothwell, stained, as she could hardly doubt, with the murder of her previous husband: but this could scarcely have weighed with Elizabeth, whose favour to Leicester was not impeded by equally strong suspicions that he had murdered his wife; while of the fouler charge of having assented to Darnley's death beforehand, she practically acquitted Mary when she offered to assist in her restoration to her kingdom on certain conditions. The truth apparently is that she was jealous of her on a threefold ground: as the sovereign of a bordering nation, whose princes had always been troublesome and sometimes dangerous neighbours; as her successor in her own kingdom;* and, above all, as her superior in beauty, grace, and wit, for which she would herself willingly have given all her reputation for wise resolution and steady sagacity, which had already made her more popular among her subjects than perhaps any former sovereign; and which still prevents those who are most alive to her foibles and her vices from refusing her their praise as a successful ruler, whose success was wholly owing to her own high statesman-like qualities.

So many conspiracies against her had been detected, that in 1584, the chief courtiers formed an association, which was joined by great numbers of the leading gentry of the kingdom, who signed a document, pledging themselves to defend Elizabeth against all injury, and to exclude from the throne any one for whose sake injury to her should be attempted. Though this document was manifestly aimed at Mary, she prudently disclaimed all idea of having provoked it by any conduct of hers, desiring leave to sign it herself; and an act of parliament was also brought in, framed in accordance with the spirit of the association, and also empowering Elizabeth to bring to trial any one who should imagine any rebellion against her, or any invasion of her kingdom.

* Elizabeth's jealousy of every one who could possibly have any claim to the succession, was shown also in her atrocious cruelty to lady Catharine Grey. This lady, who was descended from Mary, duchess of Suffolk, daughter of Henry VII., had been secretly married to lord Hertford. Elizabeth committed them both as prisoners to the Tower; and finding that their marriage had been so hasty and private, that they had not secured proper evidence of its having been performed (though at a subsequent period this fact was fully established), she caused them to be separated; kept lord Hertford in close confinement till his wife died of a broken heart; and even imprisoned a man who wrote a pamphlet in defence of the lady.

A.D. 1586.

Things were in this state, when, in the beginning of the year 1586, a Roman Catholic priest, of the name of Ballard, conceived the design of assassinating the queen, which he communicated to a Derbyshire gentleman, of the same religious persuasion, named Babington, who entered so warmly into the project, that he soon became the chief leader of the conspiracy. The plot was formed in France; but Babington came immediately over to England, with letters of recommendation from his friends in France to Mary, for whom he for some time acted as agent in receiving and transmitting her foreign correspondence. To what extent he revealed to her the conspiracy against Elizabeth is uncertain. If the letters produced by Walsingham, the secretary of state, were genuine, he disclosed it to her in all its fulness, and received her approval of it; nor is there any intrinsic improbability in his having done so. On the other hand, Mary constantly affirmed that the letters were forgeries; and it was almost beyond a doubt that Walsingham or some of his spies had forged letters in her name to different Roman Catholics, whose presumed disaffection they desired to convict of, or perhaps to provoke into, overt acts of treason. Babington and Ballard were betrayed, convicted, and executed; and, after a long deliberation, Elizabeth determined to bring Mary herself to trial under the act of 1584,—a resolution, which it is probable that an extraordinary piece of imprudence on Mary's part had as great a share in bringing about as the belief in her guilt. While she was in the custody of the earl of Shrewsbury, she was naturally thrown much into the society of the countess, a worthless woman, who subsequently, for reasons of her own, sought to poison Elizabeth's mind against her; and Mary, in one of her moments of irritation at the increased rigour of her confinement, which she attributed to the machinations of lady Shrewsbury, endeavoured to weaken Elizabeth's confidence in her, by addressing to the queen a letter, in which, under pretence of warning her against the countess, she repeated as tales which she herself had received from her, every scandalous report to which the favour shown to Leicester and Hatton, or her well-known violence of temper had ever given rise, stories which, if false, were likely to exasperate so proud and irritable a woman, and, if true, were sure to give still more indelible offence.

A commission was appointed to try Mary, and sent down to Fotheringay Castle, in Northamptonshire, to which she had lately been removed. At first she refused to acknowledge its jurisdiction, or to plead to the charges brought against her, but was at last persuaded, chiefly by the vice-chamberlain Hatton, who argued that by no other means could she so effectually clear her character from suspicion, and also by a letter from Elizabeth

A.D. 1587.

herself, to agree to appear before the commissioners to vindicate her innocence.

Trials for treason in those days were not conducted with the fairness of our own time; and, the end sought being, not the discovery of truth, but the conviction of a supposed enemy, no one prosecuted by the crown ever escaped. Mary was refused the aid of counsel. The witnesses, on whose evidence the crown lawyers relied, were not examined in her presence, nor had she any opportunity, even had she possessed the requisite ability, to cross-examine them. Even the letters, alleged to prove her complicity in the projected assassination, were not produced, but only copies of them; yet, so strong was the defence which, under all these unfavourable circumstances, she made, that Burleigh, fearing the judges would scruple to convict her, interfered himself, browbeating both the court and the prisoner in a most indecent manner; and even then dreading the effect of her presence, at the end of the second day removed the court to Westminster, that the verdict and the sentence might be pronounced, when they were no longer under the influence of the eloquence and unrivalled grace and majesty of their destined victim.

At Westminster, on the 25th of October, the commissioners almost unanimously pronounced her guilty; but Elizabeth hesitated, or pretended to hesitate, long about permitting the sentence to be carried into effect. Before the trial Leicester had proposed to procure Mary's assassination; and, after its conclusion, Elizabeth herself endeavoured to induce Paulet to poison her, an act which he had too much virtue or too much prudence to commit. When this expedient failed, Burleigh procured from both houses of parliament addresses to Elizabeth, begging her to allow Mary's execution to take place, as the only possible means of her own safety. At last she signed the death-warrant, and gave it to Davison, her secretary, who delivered it to the chancellor, that he might affix the great seal to it; and, on the 7th of February, 1587, the unhappy Mary was beheaded in a room in Fotheringay Castle. She said, probably with perfect truth, that death was welcome to her as a relief from her miseries. She wrote a dignified letter to Elizabeth, asking no favour for herself, but reasonable indulgence and future freedom for her faithful servants, and submitted to her fate with a mingled cheerfulness and dignity that affected even those who bore the principal part in her death.

Elizabeth had shown herself revengeful and merciless; she was now to show herself contemptible. Always a dissembler, she now outdid any scene of hypocrisy that has ever been recorded; not scrupling to ruin her too faithful secretary, in order to keep up a pretence which imposed upon no human being. She put on mourn-

ing for the death of Mary as her cousin ; she wrote a long letter to king James, in which she called heaven and earth to witness that she had never dreamt of consenting to his mother's death. She could not deny that she had signed the fatal warrant, but declared that she had never authorized Davison to take it to the council; and for this offence she threw him into prison, and caused the Star Chamber to inflict a fine on him, which reduced him to beggary; yet scarcely two months afterwards she created Hatton her chancellor, a post for which he had no earthly qualification, but which he was supposed to owe partly to the address with which he had induced Mary to appear before the commissioners, though that was not his original introduction to, nor was it believed to be his strongest hold on, the favour of his mistress.

That no one in any way connected with Mary's affairs might escape their full share of disgrace, James contrived to exhibit almost as much baseness as Elizabeth herself. He had, indeed, when he heard of the sentence passed upon his mother, sent ambassadors to Elizabeth, to remonstrate against such an invasion of the rights of nations and of sovereigns; but one of his envoys, the master of Grey, is believed to have betrayed his trust, and to have assured Elizabeth that she would find no difficulty in pacifying James after the event. If he did, he proved a true prophet. James did, indeed, affect a decent indignation for a day or two, recalled his ambassador from England, and refused to admit the English envoy to his presence; but in that feeble display all his wrath evaporated. It was in vain that his nobles put on mourning; that lord Sinclair appeared at his court in complete armour, telling him, with national high spirit, that that was the proper mourning for the murdered queen; that others with similar feelings urged him to take up arms; and that even the Scottish parliament, a body not generally over respectful to their sovereign, assured him of their willingness to spend their lives and fortunes to enable him to revenge her. He speedily began to repent of the boldness of his first measures, so inconsistent with the incurable cowardice of his natural disposition; to calculate the chances of success if he should engage in war; the risk of injuring his prospect of succession to the English crown if he should offend Elizabeth; and finally accepted her apologies, and renewed his friendly intercourse with her, showing himself equally destitute of shame, of affection, and of courage.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ELIZABETH (CONTINUED).

BUT the event was at hand, which, more than any other, has established the fame of Elizabeth with posterity. War was not declared between her and Philip, though each had committed open hostilities against the other; but in the summer of this year she received certain intelligence that its declaration would not be long delayed, and that he was secretly preparing a large fleet to attack her. She resolved to anticipate him, and sent sir Francis Drake, at the head of a naval expedition, to the Spanish coast, with orders to attack the Spaniards wherever it should be found practicable to do so. It is worth remarking, as illustrative of the manner in which armaments were raised in that age, and of the poverty of the crown, which was one circumstance which prevented it from being too formidable to the liberties of the subject, even when the sovereign was of as imperious and encroaching a temper as Elizabeth, that, though Drake's fleet consisted of thirty ships, only four of them belonged to the queen, the rest being provided by some of the London merchants, who expected to be enriched by the booty which they would acquire. Drake conducted himself with the most enterprising gallantry, and with signal good fortune. He attacked the ships lying in the harbour of Cadiz, and burnt nearly a hundred of them; he stormed several strong forts on the coast, and by the capture of one or two rich merchant vessels abundantly reimbursed those who had borne the chief expense of the expedition. For this great service no man was ever requited by his sovereign with baser ingratitude. He had hardly set sail when Elizabeth, being deluded by the duke of Parma with a proposal of peace, which was only meant to throw her off her guard, despatched a vessel to recall him, though luckily it was unable to overtake him; and when he returned in triumph, she expressed a public disapproval of all that he had done; protested to Philip that he had disobeyed her positive orders; and promised to punish him for his acts; a promise which her more honest and sagacious ministers had some difficulty in preventing her from keeping. Yet so important had been the damage which he inflicted on the Spaniard, that it delayed the sailing of the fleet, with which Philip was preparing to invade England, for a year; and it was

A.D. 1588

not till May, 1588, that it prepared to leave the Spanish harbours. So formidable an armament had never yet been assembled in western Europe, whether we consider the size and complete equipment of the ships, the number and the quality of the soldiers, veterans proved in the campaigns of Alva, Don John, and the duke of Parma, or the renown of the commander, the marquis of Santa Croce, an admiral of great experience, who, as Don Alvaro Bazan, had commanded the reserve at Lepanto. Before the fleet could quit Lisbon, Santa Croce died, and was succeeded in his command by the duke of Medina Sidonia, a leader of equal courage, though of inferior military reputation. It numbered nearly 150 vessels, armed with nearly 3000 guns, conveying 20,000 soldiers, while Parma himself, the most skilful warrior of the age, awaited it in Flanders with 34,000 more: and the combined army was to land on the English coast as soon as the English fleet was driven off or destroyed. The pope, Sextus V., issued a fresh bull of excommunication against Elizabeth, and announced a plenary indulgence, as it was called, for all who should take part in the projected invasion of England. The most powerful nobles from all quarters of Philip's vast dominions hastened to bear their share in the enterprise; the priests bestowed their benediction on it, and on all concerned in it, with more than usual pomp; and the nation, in general, as they gazed with proud confidence on the vastness of the force, and the completeness and splendour of its equipment, gave it the name of the Invincible Armada.

The danger was no doubt great; but it was met by both sovereign and people in a spirit befitting its greatness. To Elizabeth's honour she rejected the advice which some of her most timid or most designing councillors gave her to avenge the insults offered to herself and the nation by the pope by increased severity towards the Roman Catholics. Her wisdom, gaining clearness from the critical circumstances which surrounded her, saw that it was not by a divided people that the impending attack could be repelled; and, for once, regardless of religious differences, she threw herself on the loyalty of the whole nation, with a generous confidence which was nobly repaid. She did not neglect to strengthen her alliances with the Protestant states of the Continent, and with those other powers, who had reason to dread any increase to the dominion of the Spaniard; but her main trust was in her own people. She felt, with the great poet of her reign, that—

“Nought can make us rue,
If England to herself do prove but true;”

and with English arms alone she proposed to grapple with the coming foe. The royal navy consisted of but twenty-eight ships;

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but the gentry and merchants of the kingdom eagerly contributed others, till they raised the entire fleet to the number of 190 sail. But, though superior in number to the enemy, they were greatly inferior in size and equipment; their chance of success lay in the personal superiority of the crews. The commander-in-chief, indeed, lord Howard of Effingham, though a nobleman of high character, was of no professional experience as a seaman, but his vice-admirals, Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, were the most skillful and enterprising sailors in Europe. One squadron, under these leaders, lay at the entrance of the Channel, while another, under lord Henry Seymour, watched Dunkirk, to intercept the duke of Parma. The land army was equal, or perhaps superior in number to that of the enemy, but very inferior in experience and skill, and still more in the character of its commanders. Lord Hunsdon, indeed, to whom was committed a body which was intended to amount to 34,000 men, though not a fourth of that number was ever collected in arms, and which was reserved as a guard for the queen, who had determined to hasten in person to the first point where the enemy should appear, was a veteran who had won an honourable name on the Scottish border; but the most important force of all, from the duty allotted to it, an army meant to consist of 23,000 men, stationed at Tilbury, in Essex, for the defence of the metropolis (since it was on that coast that Parma was likely to attempt his descent), was, to the great discontent of the people, and the lasting dishonour of the queen, entrusted to Leicester, whom she had lately been forced to recall in disgrace from his command in Holland, where his political and military incompetency had been aggravated by misconduct, which threw considerable doubts even on his personal courage. So inextricable were the bonds in which this bad man had entangled her, that she thus showed herself unable to refuse his demands, even when the safety of her kingdom was at stake. Happily no opportunity was afforded him of again measuring himself with the duke of Parma. The Spanish fleet set sail on the 29th of May, but the next day was attacked by a violent storm, which sank several of the smaller vessels, and compelled the rest to take shelter in Vigo Bay. The queen, on receiving the news, concluded that the expedition was postponed, and at once sent orders to lord Howard to disband the greater portion of the fleet; but he, with better judgment and a more liberal spirit, disobeyed her command, offering rather to pay the seamen himself than to dismiss them at such a crisis; and it was well that he did so. Before the end of June the Armada again set sail, and in the middle of July arrived in the Channel. Philip's plan was that it should proceed along the French coast, till it reached Dunkirk, where it should effect a junction with the duke of Parma, and con-

voy him and his army to the Thames. But, fortunately, the duke de Medina, hearing of Elizabeth's orders, but not of lord Howard's disobedience, was led to believe that he had a favourable opportunity of attacking the dismantled fleet at Plymouth, and bore up for that port. Lord Howard heard of his approach in time to reach the open sea; and the delays that had retarded the Spaniards had given time for all his reinforcements to join him, though he was still vastly inferior to the enemy in the size of his ships, and in their armament; but the seamen who had served under Drake, had already learnt that large ships were more formidable in appearance than in reality. The science of ship-building was then in its infancy, that of seamanship was almost equally so; and the vessels of the Spaniards could neither sail as quickly nor answer the helm as readily as the lighter ships of the English, while their increased height carried the Spanish shot over the English fleet, making them at the same time a better mark for the aim of the English gunners.

It was an imposing spectacle that the Armada presented as it advanced in a huge crescent, seven miles long, in full confidence of an easy victory. Lord Howard prudently declined a close engagement, but kept up a running and distant fight with such success, that one of the largest of the Spanish vessels took fire, another was disabled, both were captured; and as he gave them no respite, but harassed them with incessant attacks as they advanced up the Channel, their numbers, their condition, and their spirits were greatly diminished before they reached Calais. There they found that the duke of Parma was so strictly blockaded by Lord Henry Seymour, aided by a Dutch fleet, as to be unable to join them, and that all hopes of effecting a landing in England were at an end. Lord Howard continued his attacks; and had not his ammunition been exhausted, he would have compelled the whole Armada to surrender. As it was he forced it to proceed along the eastern coast of the island in its endeavour to return to Spain, where it encountered such severe weather, that numbers of the vessels were wrecked among the isles on the Scotch and Irish coasts, and it was comparatively only a small number that ever reached again their native harbours, to deter their countrymen from any similar attempt by representations of the skill and valour of the English sailors, and of the stormy seas which helped to defend their rocky shores.

The next year the queen summoned a parliament, which in its joy at the late successes, granted her a largely increased subsidy; but displeased her, and incurred her severe rebuke for interfering with what she looked upon as her prerogative, in attempting to limit what she called purveyance, a custom (which had long been

A.D. 1590.

thought an intolerable grievance) by which the officers of the crown could at pleasure take provisions for the household, and make use of any means of conveyance which they could find, at a price greatly inferior to the value of the article taken. And the rebukes to which the parliament was subject were not confined to those administered by the queen, or by the minister, speaking in her name; but powerful nobles and courtiers at times presumed upon their favour to imitate her example, till, on a member, sir Edward Hobby, complaining to the house of commons, that he had been reproved by a certain "great personage," for a speech delivered by him in parliament, the house passed a resolution forbidding, as a breach of its privileges, any revelation of what took place within its walls. This was the origin of that celebrated prohibition of the publication of the parliamentary debates, which for a hundred years was cherished by both houses as their best defence against the undue interference and tyranny of the crown; which was preserved for nearly another century as a screen to conceal their general corruption, but which, though still existing unrepealed upon their records, now that corruption is rare, and the tyranny of the crown extinct, has become practically inoperative, and is only allowed to exist because there is no chance of its ever being enforced.

We may pass rapidly over the last years of Elizabeth's reign. The enmity excited by the Armada induced her to assist an attempt made by Don Antonio, one of the ancient royal family of Portugal, though illegitimate, to recover the throne of his father; an event only remarkable as the first in which the young earl of Essex displayed his rising talents, and which, when Henry III. of France was assassinated, in 1590, and when Elizabeth determined to send Henry IV. a force to aid him against the league, procured him the command, though the skill of the duke of Parma, who was sent to the assistance of the league, prevented him from succeeding in, or from deriving any credit from, the expedition.

In the latter years of her reign she made greater encroachments than ever on the freedom of parliament; bidding the members recollect that their privilege of speech did not convey a right of discussing whatever they pleased, "their privilege was aye or no;" and even imprisoning some who disputed the authority of such a prohibition. Nor was it till 1601, after several years of unauthorized domination on her part, and resistance, sometimes feeble, and sometimes pertinacious, on the part of the commons, that she was compelled to yield on a point above all others important to the prosperity of the nation, and almost equally so in her eyes to her own prerogative, the power of granting monopolies.

The persecution of the Roman Catholics was relaxed, but that

of the Puritans waxed fiercer. The parliament of 1593 enacted the infliction of the severest penalties upon every one above the age of sixteen, who absented himself from church for an entire month; and though, in the letter, this act affected both classes of sectarians equally, in practice it was only put in force against the latter.

Her operations against the Spaniards met with but a chequered success. Drake failed in attempts upon Porto Bello, and upon Panama; and though Essex, Raleigh, and lord Thomas Howard took Cadiz, the advantage which they reaped from the undertaking fell far short from the damage which they inflicted upon the city; and a second expedition, under Essex, intending to attack Ferrol, and to intercept the fleet which arrived once a year from America and the West Indies, failed in almost every particular.

In 1598 Burleigh died, having, as his last public act just concluded a very advantageous treaty with the united states of Netherlands; he had also been very anxious to persuade his mistress to make peace with Spain, which she, thinking the profit to be reaped from the continuance of the war much greater than the risk to which she was herself exposed, refused to do; being also partly influenced in her determination by Essex, who was eager for an opportunity of acquiring military glory. Leicester had died soon after the defeat of the Armada, and Elizabeth had given a singular specimen of the mean covetousness which had always been a marked feature in her character, by seizing some of his goods for money due to her exchequer. Hatton, who was generally believed to have had an almost equal share of her favour, was also dead; having actually died of a broken heart in consequence of her treatment of him, dictated by the same spirit. When very young he had got involved in debt, and the queen had lent him a sum of money to deliver him from his embarrassments. She had also enriched him in various ways, even compelling the bishop of Ely to make over to him a valuable piece of land belonging to his see, by the threat of depriving him of his bishopric if he refused. Hatton had looked on these unwonted instances of generosity as gifts, but as in the case of Leicester, Elizabeth had no intention of not being repaid; and, when he had been chancellor three years, she demanded that he should discharge all his debts to her. It was in vain that he represented that he had as yet been unable to accumulate a sufficient sum, and implored her to grant him further time; she refused to wait, and actually ordered the attorney-general to proceed against him on his bond. Her unexpected severity had such an effect upon him that he became seriously ill; and then she repented, and repaired to his house to nurse him, warming his broth, and taking it to him herself while he lay in bed, but her returning kindness

A.D. 1600.

could not efface the recollection of her displeasure, and in the winter of 1591 he died.

Essex succeeded for a while to even more than the influence which either Leicester or Hatton had enjoyed. Though Elizabeth was now nearly seventy years old, the words of fulsome flattery and gallantry were as acceptable as ever to her ear; and Essex's eager ambition prompted him to gratify her to the utmost, though his high spirit at times endangered the continuance of his favour. Her violence of temper had often given rise to strange scenes in her court, though the mean subservience of her former favourites had made them submit with patience to whatever affronts she put upon them; and she had collared one, kicked another, and spit in the face of a third, without exciting the slightest appearance of discontent on their part; but Essex was of a different character, and, when on one occasion she forgot herself so far as to give him a blow, he withdrew from court, openly stating that he was not "like Solomon's fool, to laugh when he was stricken," and that he would not place himself again in a situation where he was exposed to such indignities. After a time, however, he was reconciled to the queen; she gave him a ring, promising that, if ever he again fell into disgrace and sent her that ring, the sight of it should restore him to her favour; and, as the state of Ireland, which was still one of chronic rebellion, seemed to open to him a field of distinction, she, at his own request, sent him thither as her governor, with greater authority than had ever been conferred on any former lord-lieutenant. He entirely failed in the objects which he had been expected to carry out. He was bold and enterprising, but his unsuspicious temper made him a mark for designing men; he became first the tool of the pretended friends of the English connexion, and then the dupe of his enemies, while his troops wasted their strength in ill-advised and unimportant expeditions, and became also attacked with disease.

Elizabeth was highly displeased, and her displeasure was artfully increased by sir Robert Cecil, Burleigh's son, and successor in her councils, and by sir Walter Raleigh, a man of great genius but of no principles, and who had long stood high in her favour. Essex, always impetuous, determined, in spite of the express orders which he received from her, to remain in Ireland, to come to England and justify himself in person; and hastening across to London, without waiting to change his dress, forced his way into her bedroom, and insisted on being allowed to vindicate himself from the charges of his enemies. At the first moment of surprise she received him graciously; but, on further consideration, she changed this behaviour, and that same day committed him to the custody of the chancellor. As Hatton had done before, Essex took to his bed,

and then Elizabeth began to relent, sent him broth and kind messages, with tears in her eyes, that she would herself have come to see him had it consisted with her honour. However, as it was clear that he had greatly misconducted affairs in Ireland, she recalled his commission, and sent Mountjoy thither in his place, who speedily put down the rebellion, and restored her authority over the greater part of the island.

Mountjoy's success provoked her further against Essex, and at last she had him brought before the council, who deprived him of some of his offices, and ordered him to be kept in confinement. His submission, however, procured him his liberty, though not as yet his restoration to his mistress's favour; and when, on the expiration of a monopoly which had been granted to him, she refused to renew it, his discontent mastered his prudence so far that he indulged in all sorts of contemptuous expressions respecting her, some of them of such a character as she could least forgive: that she was an old woman, and that she was as crooked in her mind as in her body; he offended her almost equally by attempts to gain the favour of James, as her successor; all which were carefully reported to her by his enemies; and at last, as her chief ministers were treating with the Spaniards with a view to a peace, which was very unpopular with the nation in general, he broke out into open insurrection, sallying forth into the street at the head of a body of armed men, with whose aid he designed to make himself master of the palace, and to compel the queen to dismiss his enemies, and to restore himself to her favour. But his design was already known: the citizens, on his popularity with whom he had confidently reckoned for aid, refused to join him; he found the streets barricaded, and was forced to surrender. He was immediately brought to trial; the case was clear against him, but it was exaggerated to its utmost height by Francis Bacon, the son of the former lord keeper, and at a later period himself chancellor of England; who, though he was a nephew of lord Burleigh, had owed his rise chiefly to the munificent kindness and steady protection of Essex; but who now, seeing his disgrace, was not ashamed to prostitute his unrivalled genius to ensure the destruction of his patron. Essex was condemned to death; but Elizabeth hesitated long before she would allow the sentence to be carried into execution; at last, provoked at his refusing, as she believed, to sue for mercy, she signed the fatal warrant, and he was beheaded in the Tower, at the beginning of the year 1601.

The next was a prosperous year. Henry IV. had meditated coming to England for a conference with Elizabeth, to whom he was under great obligations, and of whose wisdom and political capacity he had conceived a high idea; and, when he was obliged

A.D. 1602.

to relinquish that design, he sent his favourite minister Sully in his place, with whom she discussed a project which she had formed of establishing a lasting balance of power in Europe, though the time was hardly come for the execution of her plans; and who has recorded his opinion that her genius for government, and her political discernment were not at all over-estimated. In Ireland, Mountjoy, by a happy mixture of vigour and prudence, had at last completely subdued the whole island; and had compelled Tyrone, the leader of the rebels, to surrender; while in England, she had gained the affection of her parliament more than ever, by abandoning the monopolies against which they had so long struggled.

But all this success was more than neutralized by the discovery that Essex, whom she had constantly lamented, had not been as obstinate as she had been led to fancy. The ring, which, as has been mentioned, she had given him, he had sent to her by the countess of Nottingham, who, to ensure his destruction, retained it in her own hands; but who now, being on her deathbed, revealed to Elizabeth the treachery of which she had been guilty, imploring her forgiveness. Full of anger and bitter sorrow, the queen replied, that God might pardon her, but that she never could. She gave way to an incurable melancholy, which speedily reduced her to such a state that her life was despaired of; and on the 24th of March, 1603, she died, in the seventieth year of her age, and the forty-fifth of her reign, having, in reply to the questions of her councillors, intimated by signs, for she was unable to speak, that she wished the king of Scotland to be her successor, as her nearest kinsman and lawful heir.

As a ruler of a kingdom, Elizabeth has always enjoyed a very high reputation; and in her domestic administration she undoubtedly displayed many of those qualities which contribute to the success of government and to the happiness of a people, without allowing them to degenerate into that excess which becomes vicious or dangerous. She was prudent, without timidity; bold, without rashness; firm, without obstinacy. The circumstances under which she came to the throne were in the highest degree fortunate for her reputation, compelling her, as they did, to espouse the Protestant doctrines, and establish the reformed religion securely in her dominions. Her management of foreign affairs, though less creditable to fair dealing than to her sagacity, in its results proved equally successful. She often seemed to vacillate in forming her decisions: still oftener in acting on them; and if, as was frequently the case, she changed her mind, no regard to any engagements into which she might have entered had the least influence over her conduct. She renounced her obligations, she disowned her ministers, and be-

trayed her allies with unscrupulous faithlessness. In the emphatic words of her latest historian: "Obligations of honour were not only occasionally forgotten by her, but she did not seem to understand what honour meant."^{*} Yet so singularly was she aided by the mutual jealousies of France and Spain, that even her occasional irresolution and changes of purpose usually turned to her advantage. The French court did not dare to resent the insults she offered it by her treatment of Alençon, and her negotiations with the Huguenots. It was long before Phillip, though far more powerful than Henry III. ventured on any vigorous attempt to avenge himself for her countenance, such as it was, to the revolted Netherlanders, or for the aggressions and depredations of Drake. And when at last he made the attempt, it was under circumstances so unfavourable that his failure was not only conspicuous but in a great degree fatal to his power. And though war with Spain was nominally continued, his resources were too completely exhausted for him to be any longer formidable; while for the remainder of her reign, the nation, though nominally at war, practically enjoyed all the blessings of peace and of constantly-increasing prosperity. In the same manner, in her domestic government, her very worst faults were, in some instances, rather beneficial to the nation than otherwise. Her arbitrary and severe disposition led her into the great crimes of the murder of Mary and the persecution of the Roman Catholics; but the former certainly contributed to the tranquillity of the kingdom during the latter years of her reign; and the latter would seem, however unusual such a result may be, to have had, in some degree, a similar effect, striking terror rather than increasing discontent; so that, at the time of the Armada, the Roman Catholics were afraid to show any disaffection to the government, even in favour of a prince who came avowedly to re-establish their religion in its pristine superiority.

Even her parsimonious meanness, the most unroyal of failings, was also beneficial to her subjects, by enabling her to dispense with laying on them the heavy burdens of her predecessors; and, therefore, suffering them to direct their wealth to channels more conducive to their private, and, by consequence, to the national prosperity.

Towards individuals she frequently displayed a degree of tyrannical cruelty which nothing can excuse; and the common use of torture, which is said, on good authority, to have been more frequent in this reign, than in those of all her predecessors put together, was chiefly owing to her own predilection for it, and to her personal demand for its application even to persons suspected, on the slightest ground, of the most trivial offences.

^{*} Froude, xii. 559.

A.D. 1603.

Having the same despotic disposition as her father, she was continually endeavouring to extend her prerogatives at the expense of the constitution ; but, as has already been said, as often as her encroachments provoked the resolute opposition of the commons, she gave way, never being so rash as to commit the crown to a contest in which defeat was probable, while victory could produce no honour to make amends for the disaffection which it must inevitably create.

Such was Elizabeth as a sovereign. As a woman she must be regarded in a widely different light. With none of the excellences which render her sex amiable and attractive, she had all the defects which sometimes render it degraded and contemptible. Though violent-tempered, she was utterly devoid of candour and sincerity ; preposterously vain, she was the slave of a love of flattery and gallantry so insatiable, that, even when past the middle age, she sacrificed the lives of her soldiers, and risked the safety of her kingdom to gratify the ambition of the incapable and worthless, but handsome and courtly Leicester ; and allowed Hatton to sport with the rights and property of the people because he was skilful at pouring into her still willing ear whispers of fulsome adulation and hypocritical attachment.

The last century exhibited a somewhat similar contrast between the sovereign and the man, in the person of Frederic the Great. He too raised his kingdom to a high pitch of glory and power by his eminent qualities as a ruler, though here in some respects Elizabeth has the advantage of him, since her ambition never led her into aggressive war, and her prudence preserved her from such misfortunes as Frederic displayed his genius and heroism in retrieving. But Frederic himself, in his vain appetite for literary distinction, to which he had no earthly pretensions ; in his interchange of childish panegyrics with one author, in his still more childish and unkingly disputes with another, in his eagerness for Voltaire's praises, and his close calculation of what they were to cost him, cannot appear more ridiculous than Elizabeth when displaying her scanty accomplishments before one ambassador, trying to wring compliments to her beauty out of another, cuffing one lover before her court, and suing another for the repayment of loans for which he might fairly have considered she had received sufficient value in his well-judged compliments and assiduous attentions.

However, it is with her public character that the historian is concerned ; and, though it is impossible to respect or to like the woman, still he who looks on her solely as a sovereign, must admit that she, under whom at a most difficult and momentous crisis, pure religion was established throughout her kingdom, foreign foes were

successfully repelled and retaliated upon, and foreign allies efficiently supported, under whom the nation advanced in prosperity at home, in reputation abroad, and in the appreciation and in the enjoyment of its liberties, deserves to be ranked very high among the greatest benefactors of their species, the wise rulers of mighty nations.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

JAMES I.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Rodolph.		Henry IV.		Clement VIII.	
Matthias	1612	Lotis XIII . . .	1610	Leo XI.	1605
Ferdinand II . .	1619	<i>Spain.</i>		Paul V.	1608
		Philip III.		Gragory XV.. .	1621
		Philip IV. . . .	1621		

A.D.
1603.



HE accession of James, the sixth king of Scotland and the first of England who bore that name, was hailed with entire unanimity by his new subjects; as he was undoubtedly the nearest male heir of Henry VIII., though that sovereign, having been empowered by his parliament to arrange the succession as he pleased, had, by his will, postponed the descendants of his elder sister, Margaret, the queen of Scotland, to those of his youngest sister, Mary. And, as Elizabeth's popularity had been greatly on the wane during the last year or two; partly because of the execution of Essex, who had been the idol of the people; partly because of the increased taxation, which had been very oppressive; and partly also because of her severity to the Puritans, who were rapidly rising in numbers and influence; the nation in general was desirous of a change, and disposed to hope much from, and to pay a cheerful allegiance to, the new monarch.

He was now thirty-six years of age, and had been married several years to Anne, daughter of the king of Denmark, by whom he had three children: Henry, prince of Wales, who died a few years afterwards; Elizabeth, afterwards married to the elector palatine; and Charles, duke of York, who succeeded him on the throne.

At the beginning of April he set out for his new kingdom, and

A.D. 1603.

all along his road he was met by the noblemen and gentry of the different counties, eager to pay their homage, and to testify their loyalty by suitable presents; but before he reached the metropolis, he had fallen greatly in the general estimation. He had what to the vulgar eye is perhaps the greatest, what at all events is the most readily discoverable of imperfections, he did not look like a king. Elizabeth's faults had been neither light nor few, but at least she had played her part with great majesty; and even those who bore her tyrannical pretensions with the greatest impatience, or who viewed her amorous coquetry or petulant ill-temper with the greatest contempt, were yet awed in her presence by her generally majestic deportment, and shrunk into submission when confronted with her haughty displeasure, or still more imposing condescension. Far different was the appearance of James. Dirty in his habits, ungainly in his demeanour, a buffoon, and a coward, Europe had seen no ruler less fit to rule a wealthy, and ambitious, and an able nobility, a gentry rapidly rising to a proper sense of their independence, and a commonalty beginning to learn their importance, their right to freedom, and their power to vindicate it. To make matters worse, he had imbibed, it is hard to say where or how, the most exaggerated notions of the kingly prerogatives, and as firm a determination as he was capable of, to assert them on every occasion.

Indeed he had already, in a treatise which he had published some years before in Scotland, promulgated very high notions concerning the proper authority of princes, whom he expressly stated to be "above the law;" and his whole reign exhibited a series of attempts to put those notions in practice. Even before he reached London he showed his contempt for the much-valued principle of trial by jury, by causing a pickpocket to be hanged at Newark without a trial. In his very first parliament he endeavoured to assume a control over the election of the members of the lower house; from which their steady resistance forced him to recede. Soon afterwards, he proceeded to regulate taxes already granted, and to impose new taxes by his sole authority, and again, though supported in his attempt by the barons of the exchequer, he was forced to abandon this pretension also. He then claimed a right of issuing proclamations, prohibiting various practices of so insignificant a character, such, for instance, as that of making starch from wheat, that his real object would seem to have been to establish his right, in order to exercise it in matters of more importance; but again the commons remonstrated, and the judges appointed to consider the question; at the head of whom was chief justice Coke, the greatest lawyer that at that time had ever appeared, unanimously decided that he had no such power. James tried in vain to intimidate the commons,

at one time tearing leaves from their journals with his own hands ; at another, even committing to prison some of the members who had been most forward in their resistance to his encroachments ; till at last, in 1621, his manifest determination to render himself independent of his parliament, which he had not assembled for upwards of six years, his attempts to browbeat the judges, who did not, as yet, hold their offices on any other tenure than the king's pleasure, his dismissal of Coke, and the increased prominence which he was daily giving to the unconstitutional authority of the Star Chamber, drove several of the peers to take part with the commons ; and, though they only formed a minority in the upper house, yet the fact of any of their class ranging themselves formally on the side of the people against the king, was an irresistible proof of the folly of the line of conduct which he had adopted, and a fearfully significant indication of the character which a contest between the two parties would assume, if the sovereign should be so ill advised as to continue to provoke one.

He made a judicious selection of his advisers, by continuing Cecil, whom he shortly after created lord Salisbury, in his office of secretary of state, and the earl of Dorset in that of lord treasurer : while these two able men lived, their prudence served in some degree to curb and to moderate his arbitrary petulance ; and, though they were unable to keep him within the strict bounds of the constitution, they restrained him from the violent measures, and displays of impotent resentment, to which he afterwards gave way, when wholly under the control of worthless favourites.

The powers on the Continent, in whose eyes the character and conduct of Elizabeth had certainly greatly raised the reputation and influence of England, naturally looked with great anxiety for indications of the disposition and future policy of her successor, and sent ambassadors ostensibly to congratulate him on his accession, but in reality to sound his views, and to form new, or to continue the old alliances with England. The ambassador who prevailed was the celebrated Rosni, better known by his later title of the duke de Sully, the confidential minister of Henry IV. of France, who hoped to find James inclined to aid in carrying out the lofty plans which in his former visit to England he had discussed with Elizabeth ; but who, finding such conduct neither suited to the abilities nor to the inclinations of the new sovereign, was forced to content himself with a treaty of a less comprehensive nature, which, however, strengthened the barrier that it was the constant object of Henry's policy to raise up against the power of Spain, by binding both princes to unite in the defence of the united states of Holland, aiding them with money, and, if necessary, with troops likewise, to establish their independence.

A.D. 1604.

But the sagacious Frenchman's influence over James lasted no longer than his presence at the English court. In reality James's opinions and prejudices led him the other way. So far as the war in the Netherlands was a contest between Popery and Calvinism he preferred Popery: hating the Calvinists as the original authors of all the troubles of his mother; and, on questions of theology having so little objection to the doctrines of Rome that, five years afterwards, on the accession of Paul V. to the Papacy, he formally offered to reunite Britain to the Papal Church if Paul would renounce his pretensions to supremacy over kings. So far as the war was a contest between a people and a prince whose subjects they had previously been, he was still more decided in his belief that both his duty and his interest enjoined him to do all in his power to discountenance revolt or rebellion. And under the influence of these combined feelings the very next year, 1604, he signed with Spain a treaty diametrically at variance with that which he had just concluded with Sully, binding him to abstain from giving the slightest military aid to the Dutch, and even to forbid his subjects to traffic with them. Inconsistent as this conduct was, and calculated to expose himself to contempt, it was not unfavourable to the interests of the country which thus before the end of the year 1604, was in the enjoyment of universal peace, which was maintained with but slight interruption during the whole reign.

He was not at first so fortunate in securing domestic tranquillity. The very year of his accession was disturbed by a conspiracy formed by some Roman Catholic priests, and entered into by lord Grey, lord Cobham, and sir Walter Raleigh, the objects of which are hidden in obscurity, though one of them appears to have been the placing on the throne the lady Arabella Stuart, a cousin of James, like him descended from Henry VIII., and thought by many to have a preferable claim to the throne, as having been born in England, while James by birth was an alien. The plot was discovered, the priests were executed; Raleigh also was convicted of treason, though even in that age, when the principles of justice were so little understood, his conviction was thought illegal, as resting on the evidence of a single witness. He was reprieved, but detained in prison for twelve years, till he purchased his liberty, but not his pardon, of the favourite Buckingham.

A more formidable conspiracy was discovered two years later, known as the Gunpowder Plot, almost unequalled in its atrocity, if we regard the number of the victims intended to be sacrificed, and in its singularity, if we consider the length of time that it was in contemplation, the nearness of its accomplishment, and the number of persons to whom it was communicated without the slightest suspicion being awakened, till the fortunate compunction

of one of the conspirators betrayed it at the last moment. The Roman Catholics had become greatly exasperated at finding James, from whom they had expected greater indulgence, determined to persevere in the rigorous measures which had been adopted towards them by the late queen; and a gentleman named Catesby, who had but lately abandoned the reformed religion, and who disgraced both forms alike by his profligacy, inspired with all the zeal of a convert, conceived the idea of proving the sincerity of his conversion by the destruction of those whom he had forsaken. He communicated his project to Percy, a kinsman of the house of Northumberland, to a Jesuit named Garnet, and among others to an English officer in the Spanish service, Guy Fawkes, whose name is, above all others, identified in the popular memory with the transaction. In the spring of 1604 they hired a house adjoining the house of parliament, and large vaults, which had been previously occupied by a coal merchant, and were exactly under the house of lords, which they gradually filled with barrels of gunpowder. The meeting of the parliament was fixed for the 5th of November, 1605. The king, queen, and prince of Wales were expected to be present; and as soon as the members of both houses were fully collected, the train was to be fired, and the whole assembly destroyed in a moment. The king, his consort, and his heir, the powerful and gallant nobles, the fearless commons, the wise and honoured ministers, the learned judges, the pious prelates, were at once to be swept from the land. As the duke of York, from his tender age, was not expected to be present, Percy undertook to assassinate him at the same time; and the princess Elizabeth, who was in Warwickshire, was to be seized by sir Edward Digby, and proclaimed queen. It was inevitable that many Roman Catholics would be involved in the massacre; but Garnet had silenced the scruples of those who feared to confound the innocent with the guilty, and the day for the execution of the plot rapidly approached, when one of those who had been latest admitted to a knowledge of the conspiracy, a Northamptonshire squire of the name of Tresham, whose brother-in-law was lord Monteagle, a Roman Catholic peer, sent him an anonymous letter, warning him to absent himself from the ensuing ceremony, since "God and man had concurred to punish the wickedness of the time," and the chief offenders "should receive a terrible blow this parliament, and yet not see who hurt them." Monteagle laid the letter before the council, and, after repeated deliberations as to its purport, James, or more probably Cecil (though he was too good a courtier to refuse his master the credit of the suggestion), suspected that some contrivance by gunpowder was designated. It was resolved to search the vaults beneath the house of parliament,

A.D. 1605.

and the investigation took place on the 4th of November. The quantity of fagots with which the gunpowder was covered up excited suspicion; and, on the search being repeated the next morning before daybreak, Fawkes himself was discovered completing his preparations for the firing of the train. Catesby and the other conspirators fled the moment that they heard of his arrest, and joined Digby in Warwickshire. The sheriffs of the different counties pursued them, and they took refuge in Holbech House, in Staffordshire, resolving there to endeavour to defend themselves. But in a sally Catesby and Percy were killed, the rest were overpowered and taken prisoners. On their trials there appeared reason to believe that both the king of Spain and the pope were privy to the conspiracy; but James was so unwilling to offend Philip that he prevented any especial notice being taken of their accession to it. The prisoners were convicted and executed; and some noblemen also were prosecuted before the Star Chamber, and subjected to enormous fines, on suspicion of having been acquainted with the plot, though such suspicions were wholly unsupported by evidence.

The Puritans did not obtain any greater relaxation of Elizabeth's penal laws than the Roman Catholics; indeed, they were even less in favour with James, who had had abundant reason while in Scotland to dread the intolerant spirit which actuated them, and who could never endure their objections to the episcopal authority, with which he considered the regal dignity almost identified. "No king, no bishop," was one of his favourite sayings; on his journey from Scotland to London a petition, from a very considerable number of the clergy favourable to the puritan doctrines, had been presented to him; but he committed some of those who presented it to prison, as if it had been a seditious document; and, when he afterwards summoned some of them to meet himself and some of the bishops and High Church divines in a conference at Hampton Court, he treated them with such severity that they saw that they had no indulgence to expect from him, and began even to look upon Elizabeth as a comparatively indulgent enemy. His disinclination to them was heightened by the conduct of the High Church clergy, who began to inculcate doctrines of the most slavish obedience, declaring the king's power to be of Divine origin, and, as such, uncontrollable and infinite; thus agreeing with his own views when he pronounced it as manifest sedition to question the extent of the authority of a king, as it would be blasphemy to seek to limit the power of God.

James was very desirous to promote the union of his two kingdoms, and the Scottish parliament cordially supported the proposition; but, in England, though the new solicitor-general, sir

Francis Bacon, supported it in a speech of unusual eloquence and wisdom, the national antipathy which the people bore the Scots, and which had been greatly increased during the present reign by jealousy of the royal favour, which was supposed to be shown to them in an undue proportion, prevailed to cause the rejection of the measure. A century later it was brought forward with better success, though then it was opposed by many of the most influential Scotchmen; and it has proved productive of great benefits to both countries, as perhaps, in the interval, it would have saved both from more than one severe calamity, and one of them at least from a grievous and shameful crime.

Another judicious and desirable proposal met with similar ill fortune. Prices had been gradually rising throughout the kingdom, while the royal revenue had not only not increased in like proportion, but many ancient sources of that revenue, arising from the relics of the feudal system, or from old and now obsolete notions of the rights of the royal prerogative, had been wholly cut off; so that the sovereign had no longer the funds necessary for the maintenance of his personal dignity and constitutional importance; indeed the ordinary annual expense exceeded the ordinary annual revenue by no less a sum than 80,000*l*. To remedy this, Cecil, who, on the death of Dorset, had become lord treasurer, proposed that the king should for the future give up the feudal rights and prerogatives which his predecessors had exercised, and receive from the commons instead a fixed income adequate to his legitimate expenses, which, by mutual consent, was fixed at 200,000*l*. How desirable such a measure would have been is seen in the fact that it has now been long adopted with the best effects; but it failed at the time, either from the difficulty of arranging how such a sum was to be levied, or, more probably, from a jealousy of rendering the sovereign, and especially such a sovereign as James, too independent of his subjects.

In Ireland the measures of the crown had better success. Mountjoy, the lord Deputy, had, as has been mentioned, put down the long-existing rebellious spirit with great energy and prudence. Many of the chiefs most hostile to the English authority, and Tyrone among them, had fled to the Continent, and by their flight and the outlawry of others the greater part of Ulster had become forfeited to the crown. In accordance with a plan which, on the defeat of O'Neil, Cecil had formerly proposed to Elizabeth, the lands thus acquired were now distributed partly among natives of the country, partly among adventurers from England and Scotland, who brought their capital and skill to aid in the cultivation of what had previously been little better than a land of savages; English laws were gradually substituted for Irish customs, and thus greater

A.D. 1612.

advances towards the civilization of the country were made in a few years than in the centuries which had elapsed since Henry II. first became its king.

In 1611 Henry, prince of Wales, died, who is described as having been a youth of high spirit and of most promising abilities ; and the next year the king lost his minister, Salisbury, whose death made way for the ascendancy of worthless favourites, whose follies and crimes brought contempt and infamy on the latter years of his reign.

About the same time, however, James took occasion, by one outrageous act of tyranny, to show that the very worst qualities belonged to his natural disposition, and that they had been not so much brought to light by his new favourites as kept in check and stifled by his old minister. Arabella Stuart, as has been already mentioned, was his own near kinswoman, and she had become attached to William Seymour, the son of lord Beauchamp, who was also a distant relation of the king, as being descended from Mary, duchess of Suffolk, and daughter of Henry VII. The lovers were brought before the council and forbidden to marry ; and, for disregarding this illegal command, they were committed to close confinement in the Tower. Seymour escaped ; but his wife failed in a similar attempt, and was imprisoned and treated with great rigour for four years, till death put an end to her sufferings.

James had perhaps no subject equal to filling Salisbury's place as minister ; but the one whom he selected, Robert Carr, was wholly destitute of ability and virtue, and had no recommendation whatever, but personal beauty and the fact of being the son of one who had been loyal to queen Mary. His rise was unparalleled in rapidity. In a few months he was made viscount Rochester, and a knight of the garter, was loaded with riches adequate to the support of his new dignities, and transacted all the chief business of the state. His deficiencies were for a while concealed in some degree by the capacity of his friend and councillor, sir Thomas Overbury ; but, on his conceiving a violent passion for lady Essex, and proposing to procure her divorce from lord Essex, that she might become his wife, Overbury remonstrated with so much freedom against his allying himself with so profligate a woman as she had shown herself to be, that he lost Rochester's favour without being able to prevent the match, which James himself, out of affection for his favourite, promoted in the most shameful manner ; creating him earl of Somerset, that the lady might not lose rank by exchanging an earl for a viscount, and committing Overbury to prison for the offence he had given by his remonstrances ; nor were the lovers satisfied with his disgrace, but they procured a woman of notorious character, a Mrs. Turner, to poison him. The

circumstances of his death created suspicion from the first; and, after a time, the reports of the guilt of the Somersets became so general that James was unable to refuse a judicial investigation into the case. The countess pleaded guilty; the earl and several of the inferior agents were convicted; but, to the lasting infamy of James, while he signed the warrant for the execution of the lesser criminals, he pardoned the earl and countess, and granted them a pension, though he did not restore their property which had become forfeited by their conviction.

James, in consequence of his quarrels with the commons, was sometimes put to strange shifts to raise money: he even sold some peerages; and, in 1611, he created a new honour, between the peerage and the order of knighthood, called baronetage, which was conferred on every one who was willing to pay the fixed price of of 1095*l*. He also sold several of the offices about the court to the highest bidder; on which occasion the place of cup-bearer was bought by a young gentleman, named George Villiers, who, after Somerset's disgrace, rose to even greater preferment than that minion had attained. In a very short time he became duke of Buckingham, was appointed to no less than seven lucrative offices, and received grants of crown lands to the value of more than a quarter of a million of money. He was not as utterly abandoned as Somerset, but he was even a more dangerous adviser for the king, and for the young prince of Wales, who speedily became greatly attached to him; for he was naturally of a haughty and insolent disposition, and his head became so completely turned by his elevation, that he could endure no opposition; and his influence acting on the weak and arbitrary James, rendered him more violent and tyrannical than ever. A member of parliament was fined the enormous sum of 5000*l*. for writing a letter setting forth his objections to the exaction of benevolences, which had long since been forbidden by an express law of Richard III.; and a barrister was actually imprisoned for life for using some expressions which were deemed disrespectful to the authority of the Star Chamber, in the discharge of his duty to a client.

Sir W. Raleigh had been twelve years a prisoner, when, by spreading the report of his having discovered gold mines in Guiana on his previous voyage, he prevailed on James to release him, and to authorize him to go thither to take possession of it for the nation. The Spanish ambassador, Gondemar, at once protested against such an expedition, on the ground that all that portion of America had been granted to his sovereign by the pope. But Raleigh's assurances that he meditated no attempt against any part of the Spanish possessions prevailed with James, and he was permitted to sail with a fleet of twelve ships; but his very first step on reaching

A.D. 1618.

the American coast was to attack the Spanish town of St. Thomas, at the mouth of the Orinoco, in which assault he lost several men and his own son; and his comrades, finding that he had no ground whatever for his assertion of the existence of gold mines of any great value in that district, and that his real object was to plunder the Spanish settlements, insisted on returning to England; where he was at once arrested, and executed in pursuance of the sentence passed upon him fourteen years before. No event of the whole reign had caused more general indignation. His almost universal talents, his reputation for military skill, courage, and enterprise had won him general admiration; while his long imprisonment had procured him equally general sympathy, and caused his failings and offences to be forgotten; it was fairly argued that, though he had never received a formal pardon, beyond all doubt the appointment to command the late expedition had been a virtual one; and it was the common feeling that he was sacrificed to the jealous enmity of Spain, which country became in consequence more disliked than ever.

It soon appeared that James had particular reason for desiring to gratify the Spanish court, as he wished to obtain the hand of a princess of that nation for prince Charles. A long negotiation ensued; and Charles, who, though he had never seen the princess, was eager for the marriage, listened willingly to the suggestion of Buckingham, and in company with him proceeded incognito to Spain. On arriving at Madrid, they laid aside their disguise, and were received with the highest honours by the new king, Philip IV. But this measure, apparently calculated to ensure the success of the treaty, proved the cause of its failure. Buckingham with deliberate insolence affronted Olivarez, Philip's prime minister; while his inconsiderate levity, both of manners and principles, offended the whole nation, with whose solemn and decorous gravity it was strangely at variance. He took offence at their unconcealed disapprobation, and easily inspired the prince with similar feelings; and at last on one pretence or another the marriage was entirely broken off; while, to show to the world that its failure was to be imputed to the Spanish cabinet, the earl of Bristol, the English ambassador, was recalled from Madrid, and war, to the great joy of the nation, was declared against Philip.

It was not the only war for which the country was eager. Some years before, the princess Elizabeth had been married to Frederic, the elector palatine, who, when the states of Bohemia, in revolt against the emperor Ferdinand II., offered him the sovereignty of their country, was ill advised enough to accept that precarious honour, and so to involve himself in hostilities against a power infinitely superior to his own; the forces of which were under the

command of one of the most illustrious generals of the age, Spinola, who speedily overran the palatinate, and deprived Frederic not only of his newly-acquired power, but also of his hereditary dominions. The whole English nation burned with zeal to espouse the cause of their princess; and both houses of parliament declared their willingness to spend their lives and fortunes in her defence; though the subsidies which they voted hardly corresponded to the ardour of their promises. But James was far from sharing their feelings. His notion of the authority of sovereigns was so high that he could not conceive the possibility of the Bohemians being justified in their revolt. He blamed his son-in-law for espousing the cause of rebellion; and, though he nominally went to war with the emperor on his account, and allowed one small body of troops, under sir Horace Vere, to go to his aid, and a second force to embark at Dover, under count Mansfeldt, which, however, never even landed on the Continent at all, he could not be prevailed upon to exert himself with any adequate vigour in his cause, but confined any further efforts to embassies and remonstrances, which were sure to be disregarded by the powers to whom they were addressed, and who well knew that they would never be seconded by active operations.

He was not more successful in saving his ministers at home from disgrace, one of whom at least brought it on himself by his own misconduct. Francis, lord Verulam, still better known by his family name of Bacon, the lord chancellor, was a man of genius so splendid, and of learning so profound and various, that no philosopher or scholar that had preceded him, and scarcely one that has lived since his time, is worthy to be compared with him: but unhappily he was as mean in spirit as he was lofty in intellect. It has been already mentioned how basely he deserted his original patron, Essex, in his hour of need. Since that time, though he had risen to the highest honours in the state, he had won every step by the most abject solicitations and servility; and it now appeared that he had made his authority as chancellor subservient to his darling object of amassing money. In the spring of 1621 he was impeached by the commons for a long series of corrupt practices, and the fact of his having habitually exacted bribes from parties who had causes to be tried in his court, as the price of his judgment in their favour, was so fully proved that he made no defence, but pleaded guilty, was deprived of his office, pronounced incapable of public employment in future, or of sitting again in parliament, and condemned to be imprisoned in the Tower, and to pay a fine of 40,000*l*. The latter portions of his sentence were remitted by the king; but no sovereign could relieve him of the infamy of his conviction, which adheres to his memory as imperishably as the

A.D. 1624

renown of his genius, and which supplied the great moral poet of the last century with a warning for the youth ambitious of literary distinction to reflect, taught by the example of Bacon,

"The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind,"

how little the most brilliant talents can reflect real glory on their possessor, if separated from honour, honesty, and virtue.

The guilt of the lord treasurer, the earl of Middlesex, who was also impeached for corruption, is not quite so clear, though he also was convicted of most of the charges brought against him, and received a sentence somewhat similar to that of Bacon. The cause of his prosecution, however, and perhaps his chief offence, was that he had made Buckingham his enemy, to please whom the prince of Wales himself showed great zeal in promoting his downfall, in spite of the warning of the king that he would live to have his fill of parliamentary impeachments.

The marriage of the prince continued to be an object of great interest to the king; and as, on his return from Spain, Charles, passing through Paris, had seen the princess Henrietta Maria, the youngest daughter of Henry IV., and sister of the present king, and had conceived a great admiration for her, in the summer of 1624 proposals for her hand were made to the French court, and willingly acceded to; nor did Charles's eagerness for the match abate, though cardinal Richelieu, the minister of Louis XIII., insisted, as an indispensable condition, on great indulgence being secured to the Roman Catholics for the future, in spite of some very stringent resolutions against them that had lately been passed by both houses of parliament.

In the spring of the next year, 1625, preparations were making for the celebration of the marriage, when James was seized with an ague, which after a short illness terminated his life, on the 27th of March, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign as king of England.

In this and the preceding reign the literature of our language had been making great progress. The Reformation had set the minds of men free, and they showed their freedom by expatiating in every direction, leaving no field unexplored by genius which, though brought out in additionally strong relief by the dark background of previous ignorance, needs not that contrast to secure the admiration of subsequent ages. In poetry Spenser led the way, and, though the allegorical character of his poem is at variance with modern taste, he exhibits a fertility of fancy and a richness of diction which entitle him to be ranked high among the masters of his art, and as the first who fully proved and displayed the copiousness and energy of his native tongue. As poet and drama-

tist it is sufficient merely to name Shakespeare, without attempting to describe the various beauties of that unequalled observer of nature and discerner of the human heart; and he was followed by Jonson, Massinger, and others, men who would have been considered the glory of any other nation, but whose fame suffers among ourselves from the comparison inevitably instituted between them and their mighty master. To polemical divinity Hooker brought the light of vast learning, exquisite taste, a splendid though temperate eloquence, and a store of such ample wisdom as still makes his work a text-book for all whose studies lead them to the consideration of the subjects there discussed; while every branch of philosophy was handled by Bacon with a wit that renders the driest matters attractive; a learning that makes the most profound subjects seem easy; an eloquence which never wearies; a judgment which is never at fault; and an universal and prophetic sagacity which at times seems almost to penetrate into, and to lift the veil from, the most wondrous discoveries of modern science.

James was a prince of considerable learning, which he was very fond of displaying with ill-timed pedantry, and not destitute of abilities, though they were not of a statesman-like or practical character. He was a fair orator, and the speech which he made to his parliament in recommendation of the union with Scotland was reputed not greatly inferior to that of Bacon himself; but even that speech, and the proposed union, the only sign of political sagacity that he ever gave, appear to have been dictated more by his partiality for Scotland, his native country, and by an idea of what would tend to his own personal dignity, than by any adequate foresight of the advantages which both kingdoms would derive from such a measure. In every other part of his reign, though there was no quality on which he prided himself so much as on what he called his kingcraft, or knowledge of the best means to preserve his own dignity and the obedience of his subjects, he showed himself in fact wholly deficient in such knowledge, being engaged in continued altercations with his parliament, being repeatedly forced to hear the pretensions which he advanced pronounced illegal by his judges, and to abandon them; though the manifest reluctance and ill humour with which he yielded on such occasions showed that he would have resisted had he dared, and produced rather contempt for his weakness than gratitude for his condescension. By such constant displays of his arbitrary and rash, yet cowardly disposition, and by his subservience to worthless favourites, he had completely alienated the affection and respect of his subjects, and had provoked a spirit of general discontent and resistance, the contest with which he bequeathed to his son, whom his lessons had unhappily furnished with the weapons most unfitted of all others

A.D. 1625

to encounter the difficulties in store for him, namely, a disbelief in any other source of the rights and liberties of the people than the will of the sovereign, who was equally justified in granting or withholding them; and, as a necessary consequence, an overweening opinion of the sanctity of his office, the boundless extent of his authority, and the indelible guilt of all who should presume to disparage the one, or to question the other.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CHARLES I.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Ferdinand II.		Louis XIII.		Urban IV.	
Ferdinand III.	1637	Louis XIV.	1643	Innocent X.	1644
		<i>Spain.</i>			
		Philip IV.			

A.D.
1625.

E have now arrived at the most momentous epoch in English history; and I am about to describe the steps by which a king well-meaning, virtuous, and able, in consequence of the exaggerated notions of his royal dignity and prerogative, which had been instilled into him by his father, fell into the most grievous errors, disregarding the ancient laws and constitution of the kingdom, and trampling on the liberties of the people, till they, being gradually provoked from dissent to remonstrance, from remonstrance to open resistance, at last broke into actual rebellion and war, under the fiercer leading of men who at first indeed were sincere in their attachment to religion and to liberty, but who (as success stimulated their fanaticism and developed their ambition) lost all regard for the dictates of the one, and trampled down the other with far sterner foot than the monarch against whom they had fought, till at last, in spite of the people, they put him to death with the forms of law, and themselves erected in the place of the royal authority an absolute government, more rigorous and unyielding than any that had been wielded by the proudest monarch, relying for its sole support on violence and terror, and on a standing army, a force previously unknown in the history of the nation.

Charles was in the twenty-fifth year of his age when he ascended

the throne; and he possessed qualities which, in a happier time, might have rendered him a great and a prosperous sovereign. He was dignified in appearance and in manner, endowed with an acute intellect, humane, religious, and courageous. It was not strange that the nation hailed his accession with joy, or that, disgusted with the pedantry and buffoonery, and ashamed of the cowardice and vices of James, they contrasted them with undisguised satisfaction with the sobriety and fearlessness, and even with the somewhat haughty gravity of their new sovereign. Unhappily, to Charles's virtues and talents three were wanting, all of great importance to a ruler and a statesman: sagacity to discern the character of the times; firmness to adhere to resolutions deliberately and wisely formed; and sincerity towards his councillors, and, what is still more necessary, towards his opponents. Education might in some degree have remedied the two first-mentioned deficiencies, but such education he had never had a chance of receiving from such an instructor as James; while the last and gravest defect of all, insincerity, was mainly the result of his father's lessons, enforced by his father's constant example; for not only did James's cowardice render him incapable of truth and honesty, but his whole system of kingcraft, as he called it, was based on a misapprehension which mistook cunning for wisdom, while his absurd ideas of his royal prerogative led him to fancy that, as all the rights of his people flowed from no other source than his own free gift, they had no claim to more frankness or fairness of dealing than he chose to show to them; and none at all if they presumed to differ from his opinions, or to dispute his will. And Charles, being but too well inclined to agree with his doctrine of the inherent greatness and absolute authority of kings, was led, by that agreement with them, to the adoption of this other theory also, however inconsistent with his own naturally manly and bold character.

Unfortunately for him he lived at a time when the qualities in which he was thus deficient were more than usually indispensable. The constitution was indeed marked out with sufficient precision by charters and laws; the prerogatives of the monarch and the rights of the people were, in theory, defined with sufficient clearness and accuracy; but, in practice, since the barons, the original assertors and guardians of those rights, had, through slaughter and confiscation, the sad result of the civil wars of the roses, gradually succumbed to the crown, the crown gaining power from their weakness, had continually encroached on those rights; not always without remonstrance, not indeed always without defeat, but still with a degree of general success that had rendered the boundary between the prerogative of the sovereign and the rights of the subject some-

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what indistinct, especially to the eyes of rulers, from their arbitrary disposition more anxious to discern the former than the latter, and not sufficiently enlightened, as indeed few were in that day, to perceive, not only that the two were perfectly compatible, but that the just establishment of the people's rights is, in truth, the most solid and durable foundation of the monarch's power. Indeed, so little was this last position understood at the time of which we are speaking, that it was even argued by ministers of no mean or servile character, that, as the power of the kings of Spain and France was completely absolute, it concerned the dignity of the English nation that their sovereign should not be possessed of authority more limited than that which was enjoyed by the continental monarchs.

The princess Henrietta, his destined queen, arrived in England in May, and the marriage took place immediately; but she was prevented from entering London by a destructive pestilence which was raging in the metropolis, and which increased in virulence till the deaths amounted to nearly 4000 in a single week, and which also caused the adjournment of the parliament to Oxford.

Charles's object in summoning the parliament so speedily was to procure a supply of which he was in great need both for the discharge of very considerable debts which James had left, and also for the prosecution of the war in Germany with greater vigour. But the parliament itself, or, at least, the commons, had other views. They had witnessed the continued attempts of the crown to extend the royal prerogative, but they were also aware of their own increased power to withstand those attempts, for the gentry had gradually risen in riches and importance till many of them were equal in influence to nearly any of the peers,* and the principal towns had grown in wealth and population, till they had become too independent and too strong to be browbeaten as before by the frowns of a favourite, or the reproofs of the sovereign.

Their representatives now met, resolved, if possible, to terminate the struggle which had subsisted so long, by establishing their rights, and consequently the rights of the whole people, on a footing so firm and so fully recognized, that it should be impossible at any subsequent time to bring them into question; and the king's want of money presented them, at the very outset of his reign, with a favourable opportunity. They seized it with an eagerness which was neither just or wise, for they granted him a sum so small as to be manifestly inadequate to the requirements of the state, and thus afforded him grounds for complaining of their conduct, and for objecting to the lofty pretensions which they put forward, and

* It was said that in Charles's first parliament, the property possessed by the members of the house of commons trebled that possessed by the house of peers. It must be remembered that the commons were fully three times as numerous as the peers.

to the bold language in which they advanced them. Elizabeth had plainly prohibited the commons in her time from meddling with state affairs; but now, no matter was so high or so important that they did not claim it to be within their province to examine and to regulate it. They discussed foreign as well as domestic, ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs; indeed the concerns of the Church were, in their eyes, the most important of all; and with a great portion on the lower house their main reason for attacking the prerogatives of the crown was, that it was only by lowering them that they could hope to succeed in their meditated assaults upon the Church establishment.

Charles behaved with temper and moderation; promising the redress of all just grievances, if they would first grant him the sums required, the necessity for which he fully explained to them; but when he found that the opposition, now for the first time acting in concert as a regular party, were not influenced by his condescension, and that dislike to his favourite Buckingham, who was more unpopular than ever, was a leading motive with many of them, he dissolved the Parliament and tried to raise the money which he needed by the exaction of forced loans, and other resources of arbitrary authority. He hoped also to enrich the exchequer by an expedition sent under lord Wimbledon to attack Cadiz, and to intercept the Spanish galleons; but it completely failed; and, as the late parliament had limited their grant of the customs to one year, he was forced to summon a second, which met in February, 1626. He hoped to find it more complacent than the last, having made some of the most able and obnoxious leaders of the opposition sheriffs of their respective counties, a step which prevented their being returned as members. He also tried to disarm the enemies of Buckingham in the upper house by forbidding a writ to be sent to the Earl of Bristol, with whom Buckingham had quarrelled at the time of his visit to Spain; and to Williams, bishop of Lincoln, lately lord keeper, whom he had already deprived of the seals at the duke's instigation. Williams submitted in silence, but Bristol insisted on his right, compelled the issuing of the writ to which he was entitled, and when Charles ordered the attorney-general to prosecute him for high treason for taking his seat in defiance of his command, Bristol retaliated by accusing Buckingham, and instigating the commons to join in the impeachment.

Both parties were so inflamed with anger as to be led into almost equal errors. The commons, having no positive facts on which to justify their prosecution of the favourite, actually passed a resolution that common fame is a sufficient ground for such a proceeding; and then, without any evidence whatever having been brought forward against him, they required that he should be committed to

A.D. 1626

the Tower. Charles, on his part, first ordered them not to meddle with any of his servants, though the precedents of Bacon and Middlesex in the late reign had fully established their right to do so, and then imprisoned sir John Eliot and sir Dudley Digges, the chief conductors of the impeachment, for words reported to have been uttered by them in discharge of that duty. Finally, he again dissolved them when they had sat only a few months, and again endeavoured to obtain, by means of his prerogative, what he could not procure from their obedience. He renewed his exaction of loans, even imprisoning some of those who refused to contribute; he openly sold to the Roman Catholics dispensations from the penal laws, of which, in compliance with the request of his first parliament, he had ordered the rigorous enforcement, and demanded of the maritime towns contributions of ships, a tax which, when subsequently commuted into ship-money, proved the spark which lighted up the flames of civil war throughout the kingdom.

As these expedients could not possibly be very productive, if Charles had been gifted with ordinary prudence, he would rather have terminated the war in which he was engaged, than have embarked in a new one, which must inevitably necessitate a fresh appeal to his people; yet he now suffered Buckingham to involve him in a war with France, solely to gratify a personal grudge, which the duke had conceived against cardinal Richelieu, the minister of Louis XIII., for thwarting some of his ambitious designs. An army was raised and entrusted to the command of Buckingham himself, who proceeded towards Rochelle, the stronghold of the French Huguenots, to aid them against the preparations which the cardinal was making for their destruction. Buckingham displayed eminent personal courage, but neither military skill, nor even common prudence. In an attack on the isle of Rhè, which was strongly fortified, he lost the greater part of his men, and returned to England to encounter greater hatred than ever, for the future to be mingled with contempt.

The expense of this expedition had rendered it absolutely necessary to summon another parliament; and, in order to conciliate the people, those who had been illegally imprisoned on different pretexts were released; but even now, when the policy of a milder line of conduct was thus admitted, the king could not forbear showing that he clung as firmly as ever to his fancied prerogative, and admonished the commons, in a haughty speech, that, if they failed in their duty of granting him the supplies which he required, God had put other means in his hands, which he should not scruple to use. The commons, on their part, began to act with more prudence than in previous parliaments. Their leaders were men of great capacity, sir John Eliot, Pym, Denzil Hollis, sir Thomas

Wentworth, and Sir Edward Coke, who, having formerly been chief justice, had in that post established a pre-eminent reputation as a lawyer. He was of an overbearing temper; and having quarrelled with Egerton, the chancellor, had been removed by James from the King's Bench; on which he entered parliament, and by his opposition to the court, provoked James to commit him to the Tower; though now of great age, he had lost none of his ability, and but little of his energy. And under the guidance of these men, the commons so shaped their conduct as to give the king no reasonable cause for complaining of them, and dissolving them. Immediately after presenting a petition, praying him to enforce the laws against Roman Catholics, they voted him a considerable supply, and then applied themselves with diligence and firmness to the removal of abuses; and, as they did not think it sufficient to trust to their own vote alone for the securing of this object, they solicited a conference with the lords, and, having communicated their design to them, they drew up the famous petition of right, which was agreed to by the house of peers, and which was then presented to Charles to receive his assent.

It was difficult for him to find any pretext on which to object to it; for it conferred no privileges on the people, and imposed no restrictions on the king which were not already contained in *Magna Charta*; but he tried every means in his power to evade giving it his sanction, and at last only consented to it in the hope of averting the general indignation from Buckingham, to whose advice his conduct was openly attributed.

In this hope he was disappointed. One of the clauses of the petition of right had pronounced the illegality of all forced loans, and of all taxes exacted without the sanction of the parliament; but, as the tonnage and poundage or, as we should now call them, the customs, were supposed to stand on a different footing from other taxes, and as the lords in the first year of Charles's reign had refused to agree with the commons in granting them for one year only, the commons now presented a separate remonstrance against the levying of that impost any longer by the royal authority, and a second against the influence of the duke of Buckingham. The first Charles was ill advised enough to reject, and of the second he prevented the delivery by proroguing the parliament.

Buckingham, however, had private enemies, from whom he could not escape. He was at Portsmouth, in his capacity of lord high admiral, preparing a second fleet to go to the aid of the citizens of Rochelle, when he was assassinated by a man of the name of Felton, whom he had offended by the refusal of promotion in the expedition which terminated so ingloriously in the isle of Rhé. Charles was grieved at his death, and indignant at the general joy which it seemed

A.D. 1629.

to diffuse ; but it was an event very favourable for his prospect of succeeding with the parliament in its second session, as removing one cause of contention, and likewise as enabling him completely to deprive the opposition of its most formidable leader.

Of all those who had led the commons in their late successful struggle, sir Thomas Wentworth (so universally known by the title of the earl of Strafford that I shall henceforward call him by that title, though, in fact, it was not conferred on him till nearly twelve years later) was by far the most eminent for every kind of statesman-like talent. He had also been, above all others, obnoxious to the crown, and a mark for its highest displeasure. He had been one of those appointed sheriffs, in order to prevent their election to Charles's second parliament, and he had been imprisoned for his refusal to contribute to the loans which Charles endeavoured to force on his people by his own authority ; but his real disposition inclined him to favour arbitrary power, and his opposition had mainly proceeded from personal feelings of dislike to Buckingham. Apparently he thought Charles's assent to the petition of right sufficient security for the liberties of the people in future, and just before the duke's murder, the king had succeeded in reconciling them, and had raised him to the peerage, by the title of Lord Wentworth. He was henceforward, as president of the council of the north, to be one of Charles's chief advisers, and the most formidable opponent of his previous friends. Their rage at what they considered his apostasy knew no bounds. Pym threatened him with a future day of retribution in Westminster Hall, scarcely, perhaps, deeming how true a prophet his own rage and Strafford's pride would contribute to make him. Strafford's change of politics was unfortunate for nearly every one affected by it ; for himself, for it led him to his death ; for the presbyterians, whom he quitted, since the revenge which they took was the first great violation of all justice with which they sullied a cause which they had previously maintained with rare judgment, firmness, and moderation ; above all, to the master whose objects he from that time forth so unflinchingly upheld, since Charles's consent to his death was, (with the exception of the infatuated folly of his behaviour towards the rest of his people,) his one great crime, that crime which embittered his latter years with remorse ; and since the too energetic and able support which his counsels and his conduct afforded to the king greatly contributed to keep Charles so long in that course which at last led to his ruin.

The session was a very brief one : the commons renewed their demand for the rigid enforcement of the laws against Roman Catholics, in the discussions on which subject Oliver Cromwell, for

A.D. 1630.

the first time, took a part in the debates as member for Cambridge, and they were proceeding to pass a law making the levying of tonnage and poundage without their consent illegal for the future, when the speaker, alleging an express order from the king, refused to put such a motion from the chair. Charles had expressed his willingness to receive this tax as a grant from the parliament, provided they would grant it to him for life, as had always been done in previous reigns; but they were determined only to confer it upon him for a year. The conduct of the speaker raised an uproar in the house: he left the chair: Hollis and others dragged him back, and held him in his place. The king, hearing of the tumult, sent a message to announce that he had dissolved the parliament; his messenger was refused admittance. At last the vote in question was put from the chair, was carried unanimously, and then the house adjourned. Several of the members were at once arrested and committed to prison, and, a few days afterwards, Charles went down to the house of lords, and, with a speech of undignified anger, calling the opponents of his will "seditious vipers," he dissolved the parliament.

He had thus terminated three parliaments in displeasure in less than four years; and he now determined to govern without them for a time, till the people should become sensible that he was able to dispense with them altogether, and should so be rendered more submissive, and willing to elect representatives inclined to more moderate counsels. His first steps after the dissolution were designed to inculcate the advantages of such moderation by taking severe vengeance on those who had been the leaders of the late opposition, and at the same time to replenish, in a slight degree, the royal exchequer. Several members of the house of commons were arrested, sir John Eliot, Hollis, and Valentine were prosecuted in the Court of King's Bench for their conduct on the last day of the session, and the base and servile judges sentenced them to be imprisoned during the king's pleasure, and to pay heavy fines; indeed, enormous pecuniary penalties formed no inconsiderable portion of the revenue during the following years; being continually inflicted for acts which no law had ever declared to be offences, and being of such an amount as often utterly to impoverish and ruin the victims.

With better judgment the king made peace with France and Spain, in order to diminish his annual expenses; but, though this piece of economy lessened the amount of his exactions, it did not change their character: and it was not the amount of the taxes of which the commons had complained, but of their being demanded without the consent of the nation; while, now that there was no parliament, there were on means by which that consent could be asked or

signified. Yet, wholly arbitrary as Charles's government now was, there was no settled system, and no unanimity in his counsels. His ostensible ministers were Strafford, whose vast capacity has been already mentioned, and Laud, archbishop of Canterbury, who resembled Strafford in nothing but his inclination for despotic measures. He was a man of considerable theological learning, and his preference of the Arminian to the Calvinistic doctrines gave the Church of England the bias which it has ever since retained; and of sincere piety, though it did not preserve him from many actions of a revengeful and even of an inhuman character; but he had no enlargement of mind, no genius for government, no judgment in the characters of men, no talent for conciliating them. He had been originally recommended to Charles by his zeal for the Church, and he increased in favour when he was found to be deeply imbued with a belief in the Divine origin of kingly power, and, consequently, of the wickedness of those who would presume to set bounds to its exercise. But there was an influence at court superior even to theirs. Charles was a fond, an uxorious husband, and the queen Henrietta deserved his affection by her beauty, her ability, and her attachment to him, which in the first portion of her married life was, at all events, faithful and sincere; but, unhappily, she was possessed by a restless fondness for political intrigue, and a resolute desire, not only to rule her husband, but to show to all the world that she did so. In consequence, she constantly led him into acts still more hasty and ill-judged than even his own temper would have prompted; and the discontent that the knowledge of her influence caused was augmented by the fact of her being a Roman Catholic, and of those courtiers who enjoyed the greatest share of her favour being of the same persuasion. Strafford, whose manners were plain and blunt, and whose disposition was always unyielding, disdained to court her good will, and was, in consequence, the object of her jealousy, and of continued disparagement by herself and her favourites; till the government became so weak and inefficient that the navy was reduced so low as to be unable even to protect our own shores. Barbary pirates landed on the Kentish coast and carried off the inhabitants as slaves, though they failed in their attempt to commit similar atrocities in Ireland, where Strafford, who was governing that island as lord-lieutenant, repelled them with ships which he fitted out at his own expense.

Meantime every conceivable method of exacting money was practised; monopolies were re-granted, dispensations were sold, even the rights of admitted owners to manage their own property as they pleased was disputed, in order to extort money for the permission so to manage it: while, to gratify the clergy, and to encourage them to support the authority of the crown by their teaching, fresh

measures of increased severity were adopted against the Nonconformists. The Court of High Commission, a cruel engine of tyranny, first invented in the reign of Elizabeth, now received additional powers, and by the bigotry of Laud was set in more active motion than ever, and uniformity was so rigorously enforced, that numbers of the ingenious mechanics whom, during and since the reign of Elizabeth, foreign persecution had driven from France, Holland, and Germany, and who had found an asylum on the British shores, were now driven back again to their own land to the great injury of England, which they had enriched by their industry and benefited still more by their example. Many also of the English themselves emigrated to countries where they might enjoy that religious liberty which was denied to them in their native land, betaking themselves, for the most part, to Massachusetts, in North America, where a British colony had been founded a few years before.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CHARLES I. (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1630.
1640.



ET while thus losing some of his own subjects, and disgusting others, Charles was inconsiderate enough to aim at extending his dominion on the Continent, and began to negotiate with the disaffected party in Holland, in expectation of obtaining the sovereignty of that country, which Elizabeth had, more wisely, refused; but this project was betrayed to the court of Spain by one of his own ministers, lord Cottington, and only alienated the Spaniards, without producing him any corresponding advantage.

The Star Chamber, as having a more extended jurisdiction, was even more formidable and more detested than the Court of High Commission; and Laud, as the supreme director of both, put forth their powers in a way which did as little credit to his humanity as to his wisdom. One poor clergyman, named Workman, with an over great dread of popish usages, had said that pictures in churches were idolatrous. Not only was he thrown into prison by the Court of High Commission, and, when released, forbidden by Laud either to keep a school, or to practise as a physician, so that he was actually driven to insanity by the destitution which he saw before

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him, and died a maniac ; but the mayor and municipal officers of the city of Gloucester were heavily fined by the Star Chamber for having granted him a small annuity for his services, though the grant was made long before the offence in question was committed. For writing a book against plays and play-actors Prynne was condemned to pay a fine of 5000*l.*, to stand in the pillory, to have both his ears cut off, and to be imprisoned for life ; while even the fact of the archbishop owing his promotion to the episcopal bench to the influence of bishop Williams, could not protect that prelate from still heavier penalties, and from an imprisonment, which would probably have outlasted his life, had it not been for the interposition of the peers, on the meeting of the long parliament ; because he had not betrayed the important fact that one of his correspondents had in one letter called the archbishop "a great little man," and "a little urchin" in another.

Still these atrocities, though causing great dissatisfaction, had produced no actual resistance. That was first provoked by the continued violation of the great constitutional principle, that no money could be exacted from the people which had not been granted by their representatives in parliament. In the first years of Charles's reign, as has been already mentioned, the maritime towns were required to furnish ships fully equipped for the defence of the kingdom. After a time Noy, the attorney-general, suggested the commutation of this demand into a money-payment, to be assessed on the whole kingdom ; and his idea was eagerly adopted as a plausible ground for extending the royal prerogative ; since, if considered apart from the illegality of the exaction as unauthorized by parliament, it seemed reasonable that the whole people should equally contribute to the common defence. Before proceeding to put it in execution, the judges were entrapped into giving an opinion that under the circumstances, there being "danger to the safety of the kingdom," the king had the power to enforce the payment of this tax or ship-money. Their opinion was published throughout the kingdom, and then the tax was levied with great rigour. Three men, Richard Chambers, and after him lord Say, and John Hampden, refused to pay it, and appealed to the law ; but as the case of Hampden was the one formally argued before the bench of judges, the subject has become as completely identified with his name, as if he had stood alone in his glorious resistance. The sum demanded of him was only twenty shillings ; and, after a full discussion, five only of the judges decided in his favour, whilst seven pronounced that the tax was lawfully imposed. The king exulted in his victory ; and Strafford declared that the real effect of the decision was to make him an absolute monarch. He deceived himself and his master. Before the exaction was thus ratified by the judges, men

in general had submitted to it with cheerfulness, thinking it trivial in amount, usefully employed, and also what they could at any time terminate by objecting to it; but now they saw not only that that burden was riveted on their necks for ever, but that the principle thus established placed their whole estates at the mercy of the king, and of his ministers.

To the discontent caused by these events was added a great jealousy of the innovations which the archbishop had of late years introduced into the forms of the worship of the Church, reviving many of the ancient ceremonies, in a manner which to minds inflamed as those of the puritans were with a blind horror of the superstitions of Rome, seemed to indicate an intention of again bringing the nation under the papal yoke. Indeed, this belief extended to Rome itself, so much that Urban privately offered Laud a cardinal's hat; and, though it was at once rejected, and though the attachment of the king and archbishop to the Church of England was perfectly sincere, the idea that they were thus favourable to a form of religion so generally and so deeply detested, was more prejudicial to the king's interests than the most illegal and arbitrary of his political measures.

These feelings spread widely and rapidly; yet, though the discontent was so universal in England that it could have been unknown to nothing but wilful blindness, Charles proceeded to alienate Scotland also, by an attempt to force the doctrines and liturgy of the Church of England upon the people of that kingdom.

Of late years the presbytery, as established by Knox, had lost much of its power, and the bishops had recovered a great portion of their authority; but the people, though hitherto silent under the change, were not pleased with it; and the reading of the new liturgy, very slightly altered from the English form, in the cathedral at Edinburgh, stirred them up to a fearful riot. It was to no purpose that the marquis of Hamilton, who had lately returned from Germany, where he had commanded the force which Charles had sent to the aid of Gustavus Adolphus, and who was highly esteemed by his countrymen, was sent to pacify them. Many of the nobles made common cause with the recusants, and together they drew up the solemn league and covenant, which was speedily signed by almost the whole kingdom, and which bound the subscribers to defend the presbyterian forms against all enemies.

If it had been folly to provoke such a general insurrection, it was nothing short of madness to try to put it down by force of arms; yet that was the plan resolved on in the councils of Charles. He wrote to Strafford to send him over troops from Ireland. He ordered a large army to be collected at York, and repaired thither himself with his court, having appointed the earls of Essex and

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Arundel generals of his forces. The Scots, on their side, were equally decided in their measures; they too raised an army and placed it under the command of general Lesley, and the preachers throughout the kingdom did their utmost to swell its ranks by making their pulpits resound with the curses, with which, in their profane application of the Scriptures to the aims of their own party, they clamoured against those who, like the inhabitants of Meroz, "came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty." And, in spite of the near relationship existing between the English and French kings, they procured aid from France of the kind which, to so poor a country, was of the greatest importance; for cardinal Richelieu, the prime minister of Louis XIII., had conceived such a jealousy of the wealth and general prosperity of England, that, with the view of crippling Charles's power, he distributed large sums of money among the Scotch covenanters, as also among the English puritans, in order to encourage their inclination to revolt, and to enable them to make that revolt effectual.

Charles and his army advanced to Berwick, when, as if on purpose to show that there was a lower depth of folly than commencing such an expedition, he abandoned it without striking a single blow, and concluded a pacification with the Scots, in which every question in dispute was left open for subsequent negotiation, except that of the continuance of the Scottish episcopacy, which he agreed to abolish. The reason for this weak conduct was, that his exchequer was so unprovided that he was unable to pay the army which he had collected; and this consideration ought, in all prudence, to have led him to maintain the peace to which he had agreed. But he was incapable of that steadiness of resolution which is so necessary to a ruler; and, as the Scottish assembly of divines, and the Scottish parliament, both showed an inclination rather to advance their pretensions than to recede from them, Charles, having collected a little money, again, by the advice of Strafford, who had come over from Ireland to assist in his councils, determined to renew the war.

As, however, it was evident that the sums which he could raise by his own authority would be wholly insufficient to maintain war, he resolved once more to summon a parliament; a step which he was the more willing to take, because, as he had evidence of the Scots having applied to the French king for assistance, he thought that this manifest treason of theirs would unite the English in his cause. In April, 1640, the parliament met, but it soon appeared that he had greatly miscalculated the sentiments which it was likely to entertain. The ancient jealousy between the two nations was not indeed dead; but for a time it had given way to a sympathy engendered by a community of religious prejudices. On the other

hand, the same differences between the commons and the king arose that had caused the dissolution of previous parliaments. Charles demanded that they should first grant him the supply of which he had need, and then consider the grievances of which they desired the removal. They wished to make the grant of supply the reward for the previous redress of their complaints. Still they urged this claim with so much more moderation than before, being delighted at being thus reassembled, and looking on that as in fact a sufficient victory (his voluntary promise to abolish ship-money, if they would grant him twelve subsidies in three years, being also a removal of the principal subject of contention,) that probably this difference would have been adjusted, had not sir Harry Vane, the secretary of state, declared, without any authority, that Charles would listen to no modification of his proposals, and had not Charles himself instigated the house of peers to use their good offices with the commons to obtain him the supply which he requested. At this violation of their privileges the commons took fire; and, having voted that the lords had no right to interfere in a question of supply, now insisted on postponing the consideration of that subject till they had secured the reforms which they required. Had Charles known his real interest he would, as he easily might have done, have secured the good will, and continued the existence of that parliament, which, in the deliberate opinion of lord Clarendon, contained an unusual number of persons kindly and loyally disposed towards him; but he instantly dissolved them, though even in respect of this act he was so little firm in his purposes that he had scarcely done it before he repented of it, and consulted his councillors whether he could not annul the dissolution.

Yet in a few weeks he returned to his former expedients. Strafford, though he was greatly broken in health, had returned to Ireland, and had procured large sums from the parliament of that country, some members of which were intimidated by his earnest vigour, some yielded to the legitimate influence of his mighty mind, some were persuaded by well-deserved gratitude for the benefits which his judicious, though despotic government had conferred upon their country. He was thus enabled to transmit 300,000*l.* to the English Exchequer; and Charles, encouraged by his success, returned to his old exactions, though of some, such as ship-money, he had already, by implication, acknowledged the illegality. What was worse, he repeated his acts of oppression towards those members of the late parliament who had displeased him by their votes, imprisoning some, and causing fines to be inflicted on others; and then he again marched towards Scotland, resolved to subdue one disaffected kingdom with the troops of another which was more and more justly disaffected still.

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Strafford was in very bad health ; but, never backward to support the measures which he advised, he had returned from Ireland, and accompanied the king to the north to take the command of the army. When they arrived at York they found that the Scots had anticipated them in offensive measures, having invaded England, beaten a detachment under lord Conway, at Newburn, and overrun all the northern district. The English troops were reluctant to fight against them ; but no one could resist the iron will of Strafford. He led on his troops, and obtained some unimportant advantages. But again money began to be wanting. Rather than again have recourse to parliament, Charles endeavoured to procure a loan from the city. The citizens implored him to call a parliament. He resolved instead to summon the great council of the peers, a feudal assembly which had not been convened since the time of the Plantagenets, and which, when it met, proved to be as anxious as the rest of his subjects for the meeting of a regular parliament. Charles yielded, having first commenced negotiations with the Scots, and signed the preliminaries for a complete pacification, and, in November, 1640, his last parliament, known in subsequent times as the long parliament, from its unprecedented duration, assembled at Westminster.

It was not yet too late for Charles to conciliate his people. Had he been endowed with statesman-like prudence, had he been possessed of real magnanimity, he would have seen that in fact the contest between himself and his people was terminated by their victory, and would have been above continuing a struggle, every day of which must inevitably be detrimental to his power, and derogatory to his dignity. Had he properly understood the question at issue, it was no shame, even for a king, gracefully to acknowledge the rights of his subjects, while such an acknowledgment would have done for him what no exactions and no arms ever could do, it would have opened to him the purses, and gained for him the hearts of the whole nation. Unhappily he had none of the wisdom which had so eminently distinguished Elizabeth. He made far more numerous and far greater concessions to his people than she had ever made ; but he showed that they were wrong from him by necessity.

The long parliament met on the 3rd of November. It had been suggested to Laud, by superstitious people, that it was a day of ill omen, as the anniversary of that on which, in the reign of Henry VIII., that parliament had assembled which had seen the ruin of Wolsey, and the destruction of the monasteries. Charles opened it with a speech, in which he required its earliest attention to the object of granting him a supply to subdue the rebellious Scots, who were still within the English border ; but the commons were less

inclined than ever to be guided by his wishes. The dissolution of the last parliament had inspired them with a deep distrust of him ; and they determined, before such a step could possibly be repeated, to place a brand on all the grievances of which they had reason to complain in a manner which must ensure their redress. Numerous committees were appointed to examine into the different abuses, and within a few days unanimous resolutions were passed, condemning monopolies, ship-money, arbitrary imprisonment ; abolishing the Courts of the Star Chamber and of the High Commission ; and reversing the judgments pronounced against Prynne, Hampden, and others, who were not unreasonably looked on as martyrs for the rights of the people ; while instead of granting the king a supply to subdue the Scots, they voted a sum to pay that army, in order to retain it in England, declaring that they could not spare them, as the sons of Zeruiah were still too strong. To the greater part of these votes Charles gave his royal assent, and, though unwillingly, forbore to withhold it from a bill compelling him to assemble a parliament at least once in three years, and preventing him from dissolving it till it had sat fifty days. He was saved from the necessity of rejecting another bill, excluding the bishops from parliament, by the house of lords, who themselves threw it out, though originally the idea had proceeded from one of their own body, the earl of Essex, who had made a similar motion in the reign of king James.

But before the carrying of these votes the presbyterian party in the commons had struck a blow more subversive of Charles's real power than any of them ; they had impeached Strafford and Laud of high treason. Strafford had governed Ireland for eight years, certainly on arbitrary principles, and with occasional acts of tyranny and oppression, but with consummate skill and vigour, and with eminent success. To this day that country feels the benefit of his far-sighted sway in the prosperity of the linen trade, which he originally established. But he had also been the chief adviser of some of the most illegal actions of the king ; and, knowing that his enemies were eager for his ruin, he was unwilling to leave Ireland at this juncture, but yielded to the earnest entreaties and promises of Charles, who was in need of his advice to steer through, and of his firmness to assist him to encounter the difficulties which both foresaw. Six days after the meeting of parliament he arrived in London, resolved to impeach the presbyterian leaders of having encouraged the Scottish insurrection, a fact of which he had ample proof ; but the next day he was seized with a brief illness, and, on the day after, Pym impeached him of high treason, and the peers committed him to the Tower to await his trial. It took place in the spring of the ensuing year. In all that regards

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the pomp and circumstance of judicial solemnity, England had, at that time, never seen a more imposing spectacle; eighty peers sat as the judges of the prisoner; the whole body of the commons pressed forward as his accusers; in a closed gallery sat the king and queen, anxious spectators of the scene; while Strafford himself, lofty spirit and conscious genius triumphing for a time over his shattered health, and re-invigorating his enfeebled frame, bowed gracefully to the lords, formerly his brethren in council, now the arbiters of his fate, and then stood erect to confront the utmost malice of his enemies. The charges against him were many in number, and extended over the whole period of his Irish government, to which they chiefly referred. They were advanced and supported by all the ability, and vigour, and learning of the whole house of commons, while Strafford had no advocate but himself; nevertheless, for nearly three weeks did he conduct the contest with such admirable skill and temper that at last Pym and his friends were compelled tacitly to admit the charge of treason had utterly broken down; and as it was plain that law and justice must secure his acquittal, they brought in a bill of attainder to put to death a man whom even the most virulent despaired of being able to prove guilty of any crime deserving it. The bill passed the commons, though even in that house fifty-nine members voted against it, who were insulted by the mob, cunningly inflamed by the chief men among the prosecutors. In the house of lords the struggle was fiercer; at last nearly half the members of that house were intimidated into absenting themselves from the decision, and a majority of seven passed the bill as they received it from the commons. It still required the assent of Charles, who had assured the prisoner that his enemies should never touch a hair of his head. Charles, in truth, was anxious to save him; he besought the commons to be satisfied with his promise never again to employ him; but they thirsted for his blood, and were inexorable. He had a still more formidable enemy. The queen had never liked him; and was now thoroughly alarmed at the popular fury which raged against him. She urged her husband to ensure his own safety by the abandonment of his too faithful servant. With rare magnanimity, Strafford himself wrote to the king, cheerfully placing his own life at his disposal, if the sacrifice could tend to the safety of the king and kingdom; and at last Charles signed the fatal warrant, which consigned to the scaffold his minister and friend, who met his doom with a proud meekness and a patient courage, which was scarcely ever been equalled save in that day when the sovereign himself trod the same fatal path.

The crime of Strafford's death was great on the part of the commons, who, disregarding the king's promise to discard him as a

minister, thirsted for his blood with an animosity not in the least abated by the complete failure of their attempts to bring home to him any offence that could possibly be called treason. Not that Strafford had been always a constitutional or a righteous governor. Beyond all question he had endeavoured to render the royal power absolute in Ireland, though it may fairly be urged in defence of that part of his conduct, that in that country the liberties of the people had never been secured by such enactments as *Magna Charta* and the *Petition of Right*. He had been betrayed into one or two acts of gross tyranny towards individuals, he had also counselled some of the most illegal and violent measures of the king, and had certainly desired to see him absolute in England also. But not only do none of these acts amount to high treason, but the very fact of a bill of attainder to put him to death being thought necessary, proves that they were known not to amount to it.* Doubtless the real cause of his death was as much fear for the future as anger for the past. Many of the leaders of the commons were already planning such reductions of the royal power as they knew that Charles would resist, and as perhaps might, in his eyes, absolve him from his promise to avail himself no more of Strafford's counsels; and they resolved to deprive him for ever of so formidable an adviser.

But for Charles there is no excuse. He declared himself, when entreating the parliament to show mercy to their destined victim, that he knew him to be innocent, and that his conscience would not permit him to consent to his death. Strafford's own magnanimous self-sacrifice only made his duty clearer, and his violation of that duty was not only the one act of his life which embittered his last hours with remorse, but was also very probably the cause of those last hours ending as they did end; since though Lucas and Hopton's loyalty and Rupert's chivalry were unequal to the contest, it may well be questioned whether even the skill of Fairfax, and the persevering cunning of Cromwell, must not have yielded to the combination of political and military genius, the fertility of resource, and relentless firmness of Strafford.

The same day that the king passed the bill of attainder, he also consented to one prohibiting the dissolution of parliament without its own consent. "One act," being, in the view of a shrewd observer of the time,† "against his most faithful servant; the other against himself." And encouraged by this great victory, the leaders of the commons proceeded vigorously in the path which

* Forster (*Great Remonstrance*, p. 41), supplies a sufficient proof of the iniquity of Strafford's sentence.

† Whitelocke—It is remarkable that Hume omits all mention of this vote of the Parliament for its own continuance. See Hallam's *Constitutional History*, vol. II. 1155; and Charendon's *Rebellion*, I. 309.

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they had marked out for themselves; though already divisions began to exist in their councils. Some of the wisest of them, such as Pym, Hollis, and Hampden, had formed in their own minds a plan of government, something similar to that which exists among us at present, in which the sovereign has the rank and nominal authority, while the real power is lodged in the parliament. But more violent members, such as Cromwell and Henry Martin, who, though a notorious coward, surpassed all men in the audacity of his tongue, already began to hold threatening language concerning the form of government, and even concerning the life of the king. For the opposition, if we may so call it, was, almost from the first, divided by diversity of religious opinions, which was the parent of political differences also, that never ceased till the presbyterian or moderate party was extinguished by the superior energy of the independents.

The notoriety of these differences seems to have suggested to Charles the idea of trying to gain over some of the most respectable of the presbyterian party, and, a little before the death of Strafford, and partly perhaps in the hope of saving him, he admitted to the privy council the earl of Bedford, lord Essex, lord Kimbolton, and lord Say; and even proposed to give Pym, Hampden, Hollis, and others official situations as ministers of state; but, except that Oliver St. John became solicitor-general, none of these appointments took place, and the reason why they did not shows in a striking manner the irresolution of the king; his facility in submitting to the dictation of others of abilities and virtues far inferior to his own; and the constant treachery of the inferior agents of his plans. The army was known to be discontented with the parliament, and envious of the large grant which had been made to the Scotch regiments. The queen's pride and bigoted attachment to the Roman Catholic religion made her view with abhorrence any accommodation with presbyterians and commoners (for she had not learnt to understand that many of the English untitled gentry were in family and property equal to the greatest nobles of other countries); and through her favourite, Henry Jermyn, who already began to exercise an injurious influence over her, she opened a negotiation with the chiefs of the discontented soldiery, hoping that either by open violence, or by remonstrance, irresistible when coming from the only armed force in the country, they would place the king in a more independent position. It was decided at last that the whole army should present a menacing petition to the parliament, and Charles was weak enough to prefer this project to the more prudent plan of conciliating the parliamentary leaders, and in some degree disarming them, by employing them in his own service. But Goring, one of the chief officers, betrayed the

whole affair to the Earl of Bedford; and Pym and his friends, believing that the offer of ministerial appointments had been only meant to amuse them while the other plan was ripening, in natural indignation joined the more violent party, and prepared to carry on the contest with increased animosity and energy; though some of the more prudent and virtuous members of the opposition, such as lord Falkland, Hyde, (known in later times as the earl of Clarendon,) and sir John Colepepper, thinking that concessions sufficient to secure the liberty of the people had now been granted by the king, began to espouse his cause, and, being admitted into the number of his councillors, were of material service to him.

In the autumn of 1641, Charles determined to go to Scotland, ostensibly with the design of completing the pacification of that portion of his dominions. The parliament were very unwilling to see him leave London, but, finding that they could not prevent his journey, they appointed a committee of both houses, with Hampden at its head, to attend him during his sojourn in the north. His road lay through both the English and the Scotch camp, and he was so courteous to the officers as to excite the jealousy of the parliamentary party, though they were unable to find any plea to allege for their suspicions. On his arrival in Scotland, he granted every thing asked of him by either the parliament or the assembly, even attending the worship of the presbyterians, making large promises to the chiefs of the covenant, and authorizing prosecutions against its principal opponents; when, suddenly, Hamilton and Argyll, two of the most powerful of the nobles, fled from Edinburgh, and though great endeavours were made to keep the cause of their flight secret, Hampden discovered it, and reported it to the English parliament. The real object of the king's journey to Scotland had been to discover proofs of the correspondence of the chiefs of the English presbyterians with the Scottish covenanters, which had led to their late invasion of England. They were furnished to him by the earl of Montrose, who at first had himself been one of the subscribers to the covenant, but who, through the influence of his rival Argyll, had been thrown into prison; and who, in consequence, joined the king's party, and was, for the rest of his life, his most powerful and able partisan in that kingdom. It was only the flight of Hamilton and Argyll that saved them from arrest; but the English parliament, on hearing of their danger, became alarmed for themselves, and applied to lord Essex, whom the king had left guardian of the southern counties, for a guard, which he at once granted them; while Hamilton and Argyll succeeded not only in making their peace with Charles, but in procuring additional honours from him, Argyll being made a marquis, and Hamilton a duke: and the latter became so firmly attached to the king's inte-

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rests, that he ultimately perished on the scaffold for his zealous maintenance of his cause.

While affairs were of this doubtful complexion in Scotland, a rebellion of the most formidable and atrocious character broke out in Ireland. The Irish, no longer restrained by the wisdom and energy of Strafford, began to conceive the idea of throwing off the English yoke. Sir Phelim O'Neal, the representative of one of the most ancient families in Ulster, though not the original proposer of the movement, speedily became its head. Being as unscrupulous as he was cruel, he forged a commission from the king, and then proceeded to massacre all the English protestants in the island, trusting that the English of the pale, as the original settlers were called, being chiefly Roman Catholics, would acquiesce in the bloody deed, and gladly unite their fortunes with the triumphant Irish. No age, no sex was spared. The number slain, and death was not the worst cruelty that the victims had to endure, has never been estimated at less than 40,000; and Charles, horror-struck at the sufferings of his innocent subjects, and totally unable by his own authority to subdue the rebels, announced to his parliament that he committed to them the charge of putting down this insurrection, which he looked upon as a settled conspiracy against the authority of England, by whatever hands it might be wielded.

The commons gladly availed themselves of the pretext thus afforded them for increasing their authority, but though they levied money and raised troops, under pretence of their being destined to subdue the Irish rebels, they did not send them thither, but detained them in England, where they could be subservient to objects which they had more at heart than the suppression of an insurrection, the importance of which they ignorantly undervalued; for, as the feelings which had led Hyde and others to range themselves on the king's side, were becoming so general that the nation was beginning to regard him with a return of affection and confidence, the more violent members of the opposition tried to rekindle the subsiding animosities by framing a remonstrance on the state of the kingdom, in which they enumerated all the grievances of which any complaint had been made during the reign. It was only carried through the commons by a majority of nine in a very full house; and would probably have been lost, had it not been for the additional excitement against the Roman Catholics caused by the Irish massacre, and by the increasing encouragement to that religion daily afforded by the queen and her petulant and ill-judging courtiers. Its promoters looked upon this remonstrance as so important that Cromwell told Falkland that, if it had been thrown out, he would have sold all his property and quitted the kingdom. It was presented to the king, who, though deeply offended at so gratuitous an insult, for a

time bridled his displeasure, and received it with temper and moderation; but the remonstrants, flushed with their victory, proceeded to stronger measures: bringing in fresh bills calculated to invest the parliament with the supreme command of the militia, to exclude the bishops from the house of lords, and even threatening that assembly in case they refused their co-operation to such revolutionary enactments. Their violence began to give strength to the king; Falkland became secretary of state, and Colepepper chancellor of the exchequer, while numbers of the country gentry flocked to London to assure him of their support. The leaders of the movement party had recourse to the mob, which they inflamed and excited to acts of formidable riot in the streets, and openly countenanced. The bishops were forced to absent themselves from parliament by apprehension of personal danger; and such furious language was applied to the queen, that at last it was commonly believed that she was about to be impeached of high treason.

These dangers, some real and visible, some existing perhaps only in rumour, unhappily provoked Charles to return to acts of indiscreet violence against those to whose agency he attributed them. At the beginning of the next year, he sent the attorney-general to the house of peers to prefer an accusation of high treason against lord Kimbolton, and five members of the commons, Hampden, Pym, Hollis, Strode, and Hazelrig; and the serjeant-at-arms went at the same time to the lower house, to demand the committal of the members thus impeached. The commons required time to debate on so grave an affair; and the next day Charles himself repaired to the house to seize them. This most unwise as well as most illegal step had been prompted by the queen's rashness, but was frustrated by her indiscretion; she, in her exultation at the triumph she anticipated, divulged it to lady Carlisle, who was closely connected with Pym, and before the king entered the house, the impeached members had withdrawn. They retired into the city, whither Charles the next day repaired to demand their surrender by the common council; but he did not obtain compliance with his demand, and returned to Whitehall, followed by the indignant murmurs of the populace, amid which were heard the words, "To your tents, O Israel," the cry of the Israelites when they threw off their allegiance to the imperious and misguided Rehoboam.

By this fatal step Charles had lowered his own authority, and irremediably exasperated the objects of his attack; and, determind not to witness their triumphant return to their places in parliament, he quitted London before the end of the week, and never returned to it till he was brought back to receive his death from his victorious enemies.

On the 10th of January he retired to Hampton Court, and from

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thence to Windsor, while the earl of Newcastle went to the north to exert his great influence in that district in his behalf. The queen prepared to depart for Holland, nominally in order to conduct the princess Mary to the prince of Orange, to whom, though very young, she had been married some months before, but, in reality, to negotiate for aid from foreign powers for her husband, in the event of his being driven to take up arms, which he was beginning to regard as inevitable. Pym, Hampden, and their friends made vigorous use of the advantage which the king's imprudence had given them; passing fresh resolutions through both houses of parliament to exclude the bishops, to demand entire power over the militia, to require the king to place a creature of their own in command of the Tower, which both parties considered the key of the metropolis, sending orders to Goring, governor of Portsmouth, to admit no troops into his garrison without their authority, and despatching sir John Hotham to take the command of Hull, at that day a place of as great military, as it now is of commercial importance. After much consideration and many refusals, Charles granted all their demands, except that which referred to the militia; and even that he offered to concede with certain modifications, but the parliament refused to agree to them, and sent him a fresh address in a strangely peremptory tone for subjects to adopt towards their king, announcing to him that if he would not grant them the command of the militia, they would take it in spite of him.

Both parties issued publications, which were in reality appeals to the people; but in these the king, who had now reached York, had a manifest advantage. The position which the parliament had gradually assumed was legally and constitutionally untenable, and the arguments by which they endeavoured to support them were as destitute of logical reasoning as they were of historical truth. On the other hand, the answers of the king, generally drawn up by Hyde, were framed with admirable ingenuity, and fortified by cogent arguments, drawn from the vast concessions which Charles had notoriously made, and from his situation, which showed that he could have neither the wish nor the power to recall them. Again his partisans in the parliament took courage from the evident inferiority of their opponents in this kind of warfare; and many, even of the citizens, showed, by their petitions, that a great revulsion had taken place in their feelings and opinions. The leaders of the commons began to behave with as open a contempt of law and right as had ever been manifested by the king, sending members of the opposite party to prison for upholding the king's cause, and even preventing the presentation of petitions adverse to their views.

In consequence of those acts the king's party, though daily increasing the numbers, became intimidated by the violence of

their opponents. Many retired to their estates, many repaired to the king, and both sides waited with anxiety for any event which might determine whether the dispute between Charles and his parliament still admitted of an amicable termination, or whether the whole kingdom was to be plunged into the inextricable miseries of civil war.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CHARLES I. (CONTINUED).

THE parliament decided on war. On the 23rd of April Charles, with a small body of cavalry, was refused admittance into Hull by sir John Hotham, who, as has been already mentioned, had been sent to that town as governor by the parliament. Charles proclaimed him a traitor; but the parliament justified his act, and declared that to them belonged the custody of all fortified places. This was an open avowal of rebellion, a distinct declaration of war, for which both sides now prepared; but the parliament was the more successful, both in the number of troops which were collected around its standards, and in the raising of money. The universities, indeed, offered their plate to be melted down for the king's use, though Cromwell seized the greater part of that which belonged to Cambridge before it could arrive at its loyal destination; but their contributions bore no proportion to the willing loans afforded by the citizens of London; to the subscriptions, not wholly voluntary, collected from members of parliament; and to the sums which, though originally appropriated to the suppression of the Irish rebellion, were now seized by the commons, and diverted to the purpose of making war upon their sovereign.

While thus proceeding to acts of undisguised violence and rebellion, the parliament still professed to be desirous of peace, and sent commissioners to York, with proposals ostensibly designed to secure that blessing, but in reality utterly subversive of the king's authority. They demanded absolute power over the army, and over the fleet, a control over the creation of peers, over the appointment of all the officers of state, and even over the education and marriage of the king's children. Charles, truly replying that submission to such terms would render him only the image and mere

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shadow of a king, refused them with indignation; on which, as soon as his refusal reached London, the parliament openly declared war upon him; not indeed, unanimously, for forty-five members of the lower house, led by sir Benjamin Rudyard, opposed the vote; but they were easily defeated. In the lords only one voice, that of lord Portland, was raised in support of peace. The two houses seized the public revenues, ordered the levy of an army of 20,000 foot, and nearly 5000 cavalry, giving the command of the whole to lord Essex, and appointed a committee of safety, consisting of five lords and ten commoners, to take measures for the public defence.

These events took place at the beginning of July. About the same time Charles received from his queen supplies of money and ammunition, which she had collected in Holland. The cavaliers, as his partisans were called, mustered strongly (the parliamentarians were called Roundheads, from their close-cropped heads, and high-crowned felt hats), and on the 22nd of August Charles, in his turn declared war against the parliament by raising his standard at Nottingham, a place which he chose as one of the most central in the kingdom, but which was not in a district remarkably favourable to his interests. Indeed, one of the greatest advantages possessed by the parliament at the outset of the contest was that their strength was more concentrated and manageable, since the counties in which their influence predominated lay chiefly in the centre of England around the metropolis, while those friendly to the king, being situated rather at the extremities of the kingdom, in the north and the south-west, had less power of union and combination. In the centre of the kingdom Oxford alone, preserved in its loyalty by its ancient university, remained faithful to him.

The king's whole army did not at first amount to above 1100, men; while the troops of the parliament (though the entire force which had been voted was not, of course, raised as yet) was so far more numerous, that sir Jacob Astley, one of the royalist generals, expressed his belief that they might have taken the king in his bed, had they had the boldness to attempt it. So strongly did the idea of his unprotected condition press on his principal advisers, that they persuaded him to make one more effort to treat with his enemies; who refused even to listen to his messenger; and in the mean time he was joined by considerable reinforcements, and by his nephew, prince Rupert, the second son of the elector palatine, who brought to his aid the most fearless gallantry, though its very impetuosity too often rendered it useless, if not mischievous.

Rupert, however, gained the first advantage in the war. Towards the end of September he fell in with the advance guard of Essex's army, near Worcester, routing them utterly, killing above 400 of them, and taking several standards, with the loss of only four or

five men; while the result of this, the first skirmish of the war, raised the reputation of the royal troops so highly, that their numbers were rapidly augmented; and when lord Lindsey, an officer of great experience, assumed the chief command, they amounted to above 10,000 men. Essex had been charged to present a petition to the king, requesting him to return to London; and, if he refused its prayer, to endeavour to compel his consent by force. Charles would not even receive the petition, as coming from proclaimed traitors, and accordingly both sides prepared for battle. On the 23rd of October the two armies met at Edgehill, in Warwickshire. The disparity between the forces, for the rebels greatly outnumbered the royalists, was balanced by the superior quality of the king's troops, and the irresistible valour of Rupert. Neither in this nor in any other battle of the war was there any great display of military skill. The prince with the first charge of his cavalry swept the opposing squadrons from the field, but was unable, or perhaps never attempted to restrain the impetuosity of his men, who pursued the flying enemy too far. On their return they found their own infantry, which their advance had left exposed, almost as completely broken as the cavalry which they had been pursuing, lord Lindsey mortally wounded and a prisoner, while the king's standard itself had for a moment been in the possession of the enemy. Even Rupert's energy was unable to rally his forces, and night separated the combatants. The loss in each army was nearly equal. Each side at first thought that it had been defeated. Each afterwards claimed the victory. At night there were earnest debates in both camps, Hampden and others urging Essex to renew the battle the next day, Rupert insisting on an instant march upon the capital; but on each side there were also more moderate councillors, who, wishing sincerely for a reconciliation, were unwilling to see such a prospect endangered by any undeniable advantage gained even by their own party; and their influence prevented the adoption of any decisive measures; so that Essex retired from the field, leaving the road to London open; and though the king did advance towards the capital, it was three weeks after the battle before he reached Brentford; and by that time the city was able to defend itself. The king was baffled, and, retiring to Oxford, held his court in that loyal city, which continued his head-quarters till the end of the war.

The whole kingdom was now violently agitated. Some meetings addressed petitions to the king or to the parliament to give peace to the land, others urged the vigorous prosecution of the war. Counties, in which the one party or the other was predominant, formed confederacies to support it. Some, in which opinions were equally divided, agreed to remain wholly neutral, though this de-

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termination was too impracticable to be long adhered to. During the long winter the king gained some important advantages in the west, where sir Ralph Hopton and sir Bevil Granville twice defeated the parliamentary forces, while Rupert and lord Hertford took Cirencester, a town of great importance, not only as containing a considerable magazine of arms, but as ensuring the king's communications with Wales, which lord Glamorgan and sir John Owen preserved in unwavering fidelity to his interests. These events rendered the war so unpopular in London, that in March the parliament sent the earl of Northumberland and four other commissioners to Oxford, professedly to endeavour to effect a peace, but in reality charged with proposals as unreasonable as those which Charles had rejected the year before, and which would have placed the royal authority completely at their mercy. The negotiations, therefore, were speedily broken off; but so strongly was it felt by the more moderate members of the parliamentary party, that their failure was owing to the arrogant character of the conditions proposed to the king, that some of them, with the earl of Northumberland himself at their head, entered into a conspiracy to compel the parliament to agree to more equitable terms; but before the plot was ripe, it was betrayed by Waller the poet, who had been one of the parliamentary commissioners sent to Oxford in March, and who was now one of the conspirators. Tomkins, his brother-in-law, and a gentleman named Chaloner, the chief movers in it, were hanged; and for a time all hope of accommodation seemed at an end.

Before the opening of the conferences at Oxford the queen returned to England, escaping the fleet of admiral Batten who had been sent to intercept her, and who, being frustrated in that object, cannonaded the house at Burlington in which she was lodged, to the great indignation of many even of his own party. She was received in triumph by the earls of Newcastle and Montrose, and for a time fixed her head-quarters at York, planning future operations with the chiefs of her own party, and intriguing, in some instances with considerable success, with the parliamentary leaders.

Battle now followed thick upon battle. On the 18th of June, a day destined, in a subsequent age, to become memorable in the annals, not only of England, but of Europe, a skirmish took place at Chalgrove, in Oxfordshire, in which Rupert utterly defeated the rebels, and took 200 prisoners; and which was made especially important by the death of Hampden, who was mortally wounded in the shoulder. Of all the parliamentary leaders he had by far the highest reputation: though inclined to the presbyterians, he was religious without fanaticism; a zealous and firm friend of

liberty, without ever encouraging licence or disorder ; he was affable, eloquent, full of resources, and enterprising, but also prudent and cautious ; nor did he ever show that inclination towards violent measures for which latterly he was rather conspicuous, till Charles exasperated him beyond his usual moderation by his ill-advised impeachment, and afterwards by his illegal attempt to arrest him. Charles himself esteemed him so highly that, on hearing of his wound, he sent to enquire after him, and to offer him the services of his own surgeon ; but his magnanimous kindness could not avail the dying man, who expired a few days afterwards in great suffering, regretted by the best and wisest men of either party. Generally this year the advantage was on the king's side. After an indecisive action at Lansdowne, sir W. Waller was totally defeated near Devizes by lord Wilmot, and though he took Gloucester, Hereford, and some other towns in those districts, and though Lichfield* and Reading also fell into the hands of the parliamentary leaders, these successes were more than balanced by the taking of Bristol, the second city in the kingdom, which surrendered to Rupert at the end of June.

Essex now strongly urged the parliament to treat for peace : the lords were well inclined to take such advice, and, as their ill success had only rendered the commons more obstinately determined to reject it, there seemed a great prospect of the two houses quarrelling in a way that must have proved fatal to their cause, when Charles for a time united them again by a rash proclamation, in which he declared that the number of members who had seceded, and the violence which had extinguished all freedom of debate, had deprived them of all right to the name of a parliament, which, consequently, he should no longer give them. At last, in August, a majority, even of the commons, voted for peace ; but the more violent members forced the tellers to take the division over again, and the majority was then pronounced to have decided the other way. Even the mob, and the common council of London, petitioned for peace, and the manifestly fraudulent character of the recent votes only increased the discontent. Pym was attacked by name ; and the general feeling was not allayed by the increased fury of Martin and other equally disreputable demagogues, who, to encourage their partisans, began to talk openly of the king's destruction.

The king's councils were divided by similar dissensions ; at last, so great were the expectations which were founded on the divisions

* There was no town in England in which the rebels committed more horrible sacrilege than at Lichfield. Not only did they destroy the ornaments of the cathedral, and plunder it of the communion plate, but they hunted cats in it, and baptized a calf in the font in derision of the holy sacrament of baptism. It has been said, apparently with much truth, that the fanatic fury of the Puritans during this civil war brought such a scandal upon the reformed religion, that it stopped its progress in France and Spain more than all the persecutions inflicted on the Protestants in those countries.

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of the parliament, that Charles resolved to unite all his forces in a march upon London, and with that object summoned Newcastle from the north ; but that nobleman, through an absurd jealousy of prince Rupert, refused obedience ; and the project, though one most promising of success, was necessarily laid aside.

On the 13th of July the king and queen met after a long absence almost on the field of battle of the preceding year at Edgehill ; a meeting almost as injurious as it was joyful to the affectionate, but too facile Charles ; as, though she was brave, ready-witted, and sincerely desirous of his triumph, she was ever the advocate of the most imperious and unyielding measures, and so jealous of her influence over him, as constantly to oppose the most prudent advice, and to thwart the wisest plans that proceeded from his most experienced and faithful councillors.

I have called the queen brave : the times had made even women soldiers and heroines. Scott has immortalized lady Derby, the fearless defender of Latham House, of whom we shall have to speak hereafter ; and this year also lady Arundel of Wardour displayed a courage and fortitude, I had almost said a degree of military skill, that might have been envied by many of her husband's comrades. She was a sister of the gallant lord Glamorgan, and her own lord was with his sovereign at Oxford, when sir Edward Hungerford, with 1300 men, summoned her to surrender Wardour Castle to the parliament. The heroic lady held her husband's commands to keep the castle for his king higher than the threats of the Roundhead general, who was not ashamed to employ cannon against a woman. Her entire garrison of both sexes amounted to barely fifty persons ; but, while the men fought on the walls, the women brought them ammunition and prepared their food. A week did this scanty garrison resist all the efforts of the assailants, who were nearly thirty times their number, nor was it till two mines had breached the wall, and her ammunition and provisions were exhausted, that lady Arundel surrendered the castle on a capitulation, the terms of which were shamefully violated by her unmanly conquerors.

In August the king laid siege to Gloucester, which however was skilfully relieved by Essex, who recovered Cirencester also ; but Rupert, though he had failed to intercept him on his march from London, pursued him with unwearied vigour, and arrived first at Newbury, thus cutting him off from his return to the capital. Experience was rapidly giving the prince military skill, and he now counselled his uncle to remain secure in the strong position which he occupied, letting the embarrassments of their situation produce their natural effect in sowing despondency and dissension among the parliamentary forces. But the fatal influence of the queen caused this judicious advice to be disregarded, and, on the 20th of Sep-

tember, Charles marched to attack the enemy, who were strongly posted, in numbers much greater than his own, on a rising ground on the north-west side of the town. The battle was as unskillfully carried on as it had been rashly begun. In vain did Rupert, who exerted himself with all his usual intrepidity to carry out counsels which he disapproved, lose half his cavalry in a fruitless attempt to break the serried array of pikes, which was the chief weapon of the stubborn infantry of the Roundheads. Night separated the combatants after a long and bloody conflict, which, though indecisive in appearance, left all the substantial advantages of victory to Essex, who had won an open road to his head-quarters, though his rear-guard was fiercely attacked and routed the next day by the indefatigable prince. The loss on each side was nearly balanced as to numbers; but that of Essex's army fell mainly on the common troopers, while the king lost some of the noblest and most esteemed of his adherents. On that sad field fell lord Sunderland, lord Carnarvon, and, above all, lord Falkland, a man of the most eminent talents, and still more admirable virtues, though scarcely fitted for such turbulent times. An equally uncompromising foe to tyranny, whether exercised by king or people, he had vigorously opposed all the earlier measures of Charles and his ministers; but, when the parliament showed a design, under pretence of securing the liberties of the subject, to deprive the king of all legitimate authority, he came over to his side, and, as a secretary of state, had been one of his wisest and most salutary councillors. Amid these miserable commotions his constant prayer had been for peace, which was thus granted to himself, though denied to his country, for the welfare of which he was more solicitous than for his own.

In the north the struggle was carried on with similar vigour, and with fortunes almost equally balanced. The earl of Newcastle, now created a marquis, had collected a large army for the king, while lord Fairfax commanded that of the parliament, having under him his son, sir Thomas Fairfax, and Cromwell, who were fast rising into notice and importance. At first Fairfax gained some trifling advantages, but on the last day of June Newcastle defeated him at Atherton Moor, so completely that the battle was followed by the almost total dispersion of his army; and the danger was so great that lord Manchester quitted the eastern counties for Yorkshire, where he retrieved the prospects of his party by defeating the Royalists at Horncastle, in October.

As, however, it was clear that time, by allowing the justice of the royal cause to be seen, was gradually adding strength to the king's party, the parliament sought to reinforce themselves by aid from Scotland. There was no country in Europe in which religious rancour prevailed with greater virulence, and the attachment of

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Charles to the episcopal form of Church government, which he believed to be the direct ordinance of God, was sufficient to counter-balance all other considerations in the minds of the greater part of the nation. The parliament sent commissioners to Edinburgh, the most influential of whom was sir Harry Vane, and, in the autumn of this year, they drew up what was called the Solemn League and Covenant, by which they proposed to bind both nations, and which the parliament, having first subscribed it themselves, ordered to be received by all under their authority. The Scots, delighted at having, as they supposed, by this measure put down prelacy for ever, prepared to support their allies by arms; and, by the end of the year, had collected 20,000 men, under lord Leven, to invade England; while the king, on his side, procured from the marquis of Ormond, who had nearly pacified Ireland, of which he was the lord-lieutenant, the greater part of the army which he had been previously employing against the rebels in that country.

To cement the union with the Scots, the parliament, during the winter of 1643, applied themselves with renewed vigour to the reformation of the Church. Thousands of the episcopal clergy were deprived of their livings; a general plan of ecclesiastical government was prepared by a synod of divines appointed for that purpose; and an uniform severity of manners was enforced, greatly at variance with all the previous habits and feelings of the nation. In the towns the theatres were closed, in the villages the Maypoles were cut down, and all popular recreations forbidden as the most heinous sins; till at last, in the height of their success, fresh divisions appeared among the victorious party, and the presbyterians, who had hitherto prevailed, began to feel a jealousy of the independents, whose views evidently pointed, beyond the overthrow of the Church, at the destruction of the monarchy; while the independents, who now openly avowed their principles and their hopes, hated the presbyterians as much as the cavaliers. The two parties united cordially in only one measure, the abolition of the liberty of the press, commanding, in the summer of 1643, that henceforth all publications should be subjected to a strict examination.

The reinforcements which Ormond sent to the king from Ireland, though consisting of no less than ten regiments, were rather of disservice to his cause; for not only were they defeated by Fairfax within six weeks of their landing, but the general feeling against papists, which it was asserted they were, led several of his most trusted officers to go over to the parliament. Charles, however, now began to trust to civil as well as to military operations. He had been led to conceive the idea of issuing a proclamation to dissolve the parliament, and was only dissuaded by the strong representations of the futility of such a step, and of the fruitless exasperation which

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it would cause, that were addressed to him by Hyde. Instead of this measure he convened a second parliament, consisting of those members of both houses who adhered to his interests, which met at Oxford, in January, 1644, and was greatly superior to the London parliament in the number of peers, though proportionably inferior in that of members of the house of commons. He desired to make this assembly an instrument of negotiations for peace, but his hopes were disappointed, because the London parliament refused to consider that assembled at Oxford as a body of equal authority with themselves; while Charles persisted in withholding any acknowledgment that those who remained in London were a parliament at all. So, after some fruitless messages, he prorogued the Oxford assembly after it had voted him a grant of money, and, in imitation of the London parliament, had imposed an excise, a tax previously unknown, on different commodities. So regular in form were the measures adopted by both sides in such a time of universal commotion and violence. It is worth noticing, as another proof of the deeply-seated reverence for law and order which still pervaded the whole nation, and which makes this revolution of which we are speaking such a striking contrast to that which afterwards broke up the institutions of France, that, throughout the whole of these sad times, the judges continued to go their circuits as usual, even through those counties where the war was actually raging.

At the beginning of the year 1644, the Scottish army, under lord Leven, crossed the borders; and, encouraged by their advance, the parliament began to prepare for a more vigorous prosecution of the war. Besides the Scots, they had now on foot four armies, under lord Essex, lord Manchester, lord Fairfax, and sir W. Waller, and their united numbers exceeded 55,000 men; while the royal forces were very inferior in number, and were much worse supplied with money and the other requisites for war. The king was at Oxford with the queen, now within two months of her confinement, when he received intelligence that Essex and Waller were about to combine their forces in an attack on that city. Henrietta removed for safety to Exeter, and never saw her husband again. He remained behind till the city was almost entirely surrounded, when, by an able movement, he quitted Oxford with a body of light troops, and marched northward; then, hearing that on receiving news of his movements the parliamentary generals had raised the siege, and that, after a violent quarrel with Essex, Waller was pursuing him alone, he turned back on his path, re-entered Oxford, and, at the end of June, gave Waller a severe defeat at Cropredy Bridge.

It was a short lived exultation with which this victory filled his heart. Only three days afterwards it was counterbalanced by the

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fatal day of Marston Moor, the greatest battle which had taken place, and the most fatal blow which had been struck in the war.

CHAPTER XL.

CHARLES I. (CONTINUED).

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IN the early part of the year Rupert had been reaping abundant laurels in the centre of the kingdom. With infinitely smaller numbers he had routed sir John Meldrum and relieved Newark, and had followed up this success by compelling another army to raise the siege of Latham House, where the heroic lady Derby had been for three long months amazing England by the gallant defence which she was making against 3000 of the choicest troops of the parliament. Her garrison consisted of 300 men and herself. Saragossa itself was not more intrepidly defended. In vain did Rigby, who had been left in command by Fairfax, procure a huge mortar, the shells from which laid the inner buildings of the castle in ruins. The garrison sallied out by night, and bore it in triumph within the walls. Four times each day, for a brief period, did the immortal band cease from its human efforts, and retire to the chapel to implore the protection of the God of battles; the rest of the day and night, with hearts so dauntless that they scarcely noticed the decay of their strength, or the diminution of their numbers, did they toil at the defence of their battered walls, till, on the 25th of May (it was on the 28th of February that Fairfax had first summoned the castle to surrender), the besiegers retreated at the approach of Rupert, and sought refuge in Bolton, which could not save them from the just vengeance that their cruelty had provoked.

Rupert had scarcely performed these important services when he received a pressing despatch from Charles, commanding him to hasten to relieve York, where Lord Newcastle was closely blockaded by the three armies of Fairfax, Manchester, and Leven, amounting to 30,000 men. He had scarcely 20,000. Without delay he hastened to that important city, outmanœuvred the enemy, passed through their lines, and then, conceiving that his orders "to beat the rebels' army of both kingdoms" left him no alternative, he prepared to attack the beleaguering hosts. It was a fatal resolution. At the beginning of the war the superior quality of the king's troops had constantly made amends for their inferiority in

numbers; but Cromwell perceiving, as he told Hampden, that such a rabble as they then led on, "composed of decayed tapsters and serving-men," would never be brought to stand before the gentlemen who, with their hardy retainers, formed the bulk of the royal force, had begun to remodel the army after his own fashion, finding in the zeal of fanaticism the courage and energy which his adversaries derived from the natural gallantry of their high blood; and his own regiment especially was formed of "God-fearing men," as he termed them, furious zealots who, in obedience to the fancied dictation of religion, were as incapable of fear as of moderation or humanity. Newcastle strongly urged Rupert to be content with having saved York, and to leave the hostile armies to melt away by their own difficulties and dissensions; nor was he without good grounds for his expectations of such a result, for the Scotch and English regiments were beginning to quarrel. More than one general was secretly actuated by jealousy of Cromwell, and altogether there was so much disunion in their camp, that, had the news of Waller's defeat at Cropredy reached them sooner, we can scarcely doubt that it would have caused the separation of the three armies: but the prince considered his orders imperative, and determined to fight at once. Newcastle bore his part in the conflict merely, as he said, as a volunteer, refusing any share in the conduct of an operation of which he disapproved. It was late in the day of the 2nd of July when the prince ordered prayers to be read in front of each regiment of his army, and when the voice of supplication was succeeded by the battle-cry and the roar of artillery. He himself and his irresistible lifeguards on the left wing fell at once on the Scots, nobly seconded by Goring, who, though destitute of honour and principle, was endued with great skill and courage, and who never displayed them more conspicuously. The Scots fled in confusion, though their flight could not save them from the slaughter which was mercilessly dealt among them; but on the other side of the field the fate of the battle was far different. Byron with his cavalry had advanced imprudently from the strong position in which he had been placed, and Cromwell's Ironsides, who won their name that day, charged them while in disorder, and broke them as completely as the Scots were routed on the other wing. In the centre the battle raged sternly, and for some time with equal fortune. Lord Fairfax with his infantry was gallantly resisted by Cavendish, who commanded the regiments which had been furnished from the city of York, and which were known in the army as Newcastle's lambs, till at last, their flank being uncovered by the rout of Byron, Cromwell turned their own artillery against their rapidly-lessening phalanx, and they perished, almost to a man, on the ground on which they had first been

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posted, and which they held even in death. Terrible slaughter had been dealt among each army, a great portion of each was driven from the field ; and still the strife was but half over. Rupert and Cromwell, each returning from what they fancied a secure victory, found themselves opposed to each other, though the face of the battle was now so changed that Rupert occupied the ground on which the parliamentary forces had stood in the earlier part of the day, while the Ironsides were charging him from what had then been his own position. His own resolution was as undaunted, his own energy as unfaltering, as at the first triumphant onset of the day ; but his followers, fatigued by their own success, and dispirited at finding a more formidable enemy than ever still in their front, were no longer a match for the persevering valour with which fanaticism inspired the fierce Puritans. They were broken at once, and fled unresistingly from the field, leaving baggage, artillery, ammunition, and standards to the conquerors.

The victory was great ; its effects were greater still. It placed the north of England at the mercy of the parliament, and deprived the king of the services of Newcastle, who had made great sacrifices for his cause, and who still possessed great influence, but who now, disgusted at the disrespect of his advice shown by Rupert, and at the calamity which had followed, quitted the kingdom, and retired to Holland. Rupert himself showed that true courage which shines brightest in adversity, and, disdaining to despair, collected 6000 men, the remnant of his army, and retired in good order towards Shrewsbury, where he expected to meet the king ; but Charles, on the defeat of Waller, had pursued Essex into Cornwall, where, if it had not been for the licentiousness and insubordination of his officers, he would have taken the whole rebel army prisoners. Essex, however, escaped in a boat ; his cavalry took advantage of a fog to elude the carelessness of Goring, who had been despatched from the north immediately after the late battle ; and the infantry under Skippon capitulated, on condition of being allowed to retire, with the surrender of their arms, artillery, ammunition, and baggage.

These events, even when apparently most favourable to Charles, and contributing, as the operations against Essex certainly did, greatly to his personal credit, were yet injurious to his interests, by exalting the independents at the expense of the presbyterians. Essex was one of the chiefs of the presbyterians, and his victories had never been very decisive ; nor, if his detractors were to be believed, had they ever been pushed to the utmost ; while the great success of Marston Moor was universally attributed to Cromwell, the pride of the independents, whose reputation and influence were daily increasing, and whose ambitious views were rapidly becoming

more developed. The king returned towards London, and fought a second battle, at Newbury, against lord Manchester. Not once in the whole war did he meet his enemies on equal terms. Here he was, as usual, outnumbered, and was only saved by the shortness of the day (it was the end of October) from a total overthrow.

It was for a long time the character of this war, that ill success in one quarter was balanced by good fortune in another. Montrose had been hastening to join Rupert before Marston Moor, and the two gallant chiefs had met at Richmond a day or two after the battle. Montrose returned to the Highlands, where his influence soon collected a small body of men, and, uniting them with some troops which had been sent over to him from Ireland, he proceeded to perform a series of exploits more resembling the fictions of romance than the sober realities of history. His whole force consisted of about 2400 men, almost destitute of all the supplies which are usually thought indispensable to an army; and with this handful of what could scarcely be called soldiers, since nearly half of them had never been under arms before, and a large proportion had no arms now, he proceeded to attack lord Elcho, who was lying near Perth with 6000 infantry and 700 cavalry, all well appointed and full of confidence. Montrose's cavalry consisted of two men, a groom with a led horse for himself, and a friend who was too lame to walk. Never was it more conspicuously seen how the genius and resolution of one great man can outweigh the most fearful odds. Bows and arrows had hardly been seen in Scotland since Bruce had defied them at Bannockburn, but not only were they now brought into action at Tippermuir, but there was not enough even of them. Montrose's powder was soon exhausted; in vain did Elcho seek to check his advance with a shower of musketry; his men replied with stones which they picked up from the ground, the only missiles they had left, and charged straight on till they came to close quarters with the enemy, who fled in confusion, leaving 2000 men dead on the field, and a great many prisoners, with whom the conqueror entered Perth in triumph. He lost no time, but proceeded northwards to Aberdeen, where he defeated lord Burley in an equally decisive manner; and, after some more skirmishes, which were all attended with similar success, finding that the greater part of his army had returned home to secure their booty, and to rest after their rapid marches, he retired with his Irish forces to the Highlands, to wait till they should rejoin his standard.

With the return of spring, he pursued the same marvellous career, his forces scarcely ever amounting to more than half the number of the enemy. Baillie, an officer of high reputation, as a

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pupil of Gustavus Adolphus, was in vain brought from England to endeavour to check his progress. He routed Argyll at Inverlochy; when apparently hemmed in by Baillie and Urrey among the Grampian Hills he displayed as great a skill in a retreat under the most difficult circumstances, as he had ever shown energy in an attack. Again and again he was victorious. Urrey and Baillie divided their forces the more surely to intercept him, as each of their divisions was far superior in number to his whole force. He scattered the one at Auldcarne, and the other at Alford; and at Kilsyth, on the 15th of August, he gave Baillie a second defeat of so complete a character, that no army was left to the covenanters in any part of Scotland. It was his last triumph; for, though many of the nobles were won over by it to declare for the royal cause, and though he was able to gratify his own feelings by releasing those of his friends who had been thrown into prison at Edinburgh, these were but barren results. Nay, in one sense, his successes were even injurious to him. Defeat might have shown his men the necessity of keeping together; the security of victory gave them courage to separate. Some wished to secure the booty that they had acquired, others to repair the injuries done to their farms in their absence. Under one pretext or another the greater part of his forces melted away, and left him little able to resist the army sent from England under Lesley.

Under any circumstances, even if left to himself, he had an arduous task before him; success was rendered impossible by the machinations of others. The too easy Charles, so prone to trust every one as to be incapable of reposing a steady confidence in any one, was induced to interfere with his command, and sent him positive orders to quit the Highlands, and to descend towards the borders. His scanty numbers, he had barely 600 men, and the carelessness of his scouts prevented him from obtaining accurate information of Lesley's movements, till he was attacked by him at Philiphaugh, near Selkirk, on the 13th of September, with upwards 6000 men. It is almost incredible how long Montrose, with his handful of men, made victory seem doubtful; but at last numbers prevailed, and he was forced to retreat, leaving more than half his force dead or prisoners to the enemy. The covenanters treated the captives with their usual cruelty; the common men were butchered in cold blood, those of higher rank were put to death with the forms of legal execution; but, however unworthily used, their triumph was complete, and in Scotland the success of the Roundheads was permanently established.

I have related the chief events of Montrose's wondrous, but brief career, without mentioning the progress of affairs in England during the same period, to which it is now time to return. In

the autumn the jealousy of Cromwell entertained by the presbyterians increased so much, that they would have impeached him could they have seen any probability of success; and, when they abandoned that design, they were driven by their fear of him again to seek to make peace with the king, sending commissioners, the chief of whom were Hollis and Whitelocke, a lawyer of high reputation, to Oxford. Charles sent an answer to the proposals which they brought by envoys of his own; and, in the beginning of the year 1645, it was agreed that forty commissioners, twenty-three appointed by the parliament and seventeen by the king, should meet at Uxbridge, to endeavour to terminate the war, and to discuss the provisions of a treaty which should have that effect.

But in the mean time the independents were not idle. They were as resolved on war as the presbyterians were desirous of peace; and, in order to disarm the latter, after Cromwell in a long speech had announced to the commons that the people in general believed that the only object of the members of both houses was to enrich themselves by the protraction of the war, one of the most obscure of his tools, named Zouch Tate, proposed a law, known afterwards as the Self-denying Ordinance, to make members of parliament incapable of any civil or military office. Though the entire plan of the independents was not divined, it was rejected by the lords, whom it was resolved to terrify into a subsequent acquiescence. Sir John Hotham had committed the first overt act of rebellion against the king by refusing to admit him into Hull. He and his son were now accused of a design at a later period to surrender that important town. Being both presbyterians, they were convicted and executed, and other commanders met a similar fate. Their doom was only the prelude to that of a more illustrious victim. Archbishop Laud had now been in prison four years. As Strafford marched proudly to his death, the aged prelate, from the window of his cell, had addressed his last benediction to his departing friend, and had ever since been kept in close confinement without a trial. It was now hurried on with the most indecent rapidity; yet, as in the case of Strafford, it was found impossible to convict him of any act resembling high treason; and, as it was impossible to destroy him by a bill of attainder, which required the king's consent, the parliament resolved that their own ordinance should be sufficient, and on the 3rd of January he was beheaded on Tower Hill.

At the end of the same month the conference opened at Uxbridge. Peace was absolutely indispensable to Charles, whose difficulties were manifestly increasing, and whose very army in the preceding autumn had communicated their anxiety for it to the parliamentary generals; nor, except Rupert, and a few Roman Catholics, who

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had not accompanied the queen, did any one raise a voice against it; yet the counsels of these few, and the letters of the queen, ever urging him to make no concessions, prevailed so strongly, that he was but little inclined to second the efforts of his commissioners. Peace was equally necessary for the presbyterians, whose influence was daily yielding to the superior vigour of the independents, and who were thoroughly alarmed at the violence of their language, and scarcely concealed designs, which were further revealed to them by more than one event which happened during these negotiations; yet their hatred of episcopacy prevailed so far over every other consideration in the minds of this party, and of the Scottish commissioners, that they, too, were, in their hearts, as little inclined to peace as the king, unless they could impose it on him with the lordly voice of conquerors, a position to which as yet they had no pretensions.

The fruitless result of the conferences was owing solely to these undue pretensions on their part. The king allowed his own inclinations to be so overruled by his commissioners, that he offered to consent to such restrictions on the power of bishops as would have left the episcopal authority little more than a name. He consented to entrust the command of the militia for seven years to a board, half the members of which were to be appointed by the parliament, and would perhaps have made still further advances towards their demands, had he not received news of Montrose's victory at Inverlochy, which rekindled in his breast hopes of restoration to his former power on less rigorous conditions. The presbyterians, too, were on their side encouraged by the news of the capture of Shrewsbury, which was taken at the same time, and which was a place of great consequence, as a sort of key to North Wales, a district previously wholly in the king's interest. So at the end of twenty days the conferences were broken off; and Charles, to show to the whole nation that it was not he who had been the obstacle to peace, published an account of the concessions which he had offered, to which the parliament gave no contradiction or reply.

In the mean time the independents, relieved from opposition by the leaders of the presbyterian party being thus engaged at Uxbridge, had concerted and carried out a plan for new-modelling the army, consolidating the different divisions into one force of 20,000 men, of whom sir Thomas Fairfax was to be the general; and in his commission all respectful mention of the king's personal safety was for the first time omitted. Essex's commission was not formally cancelled, but he was virtually superseded, and soon afterwards he resigned his command. Lord Manchester did the same; and, as their appointments had been a principal reason with the house of lords for refusing their consent to the Self-denying

Ordinance, they now passed a new bill, brought in with the same object as the former, though it no longer prevented members of either house from receiving fresh appointments.

Cromwell, as a member of the lower house, ought to have resigned his command, as well as the other officers who were thus disbanded; but that was not the object of those who promoted this ordinance. Accordingly, his troopers were easily excited to declare that they would serve under no one else. He quitted London on pretence of bringing them into submission to the orders of the house; and, as he was thus rendering himself useful to Fairfax, that general, utterly destitute of any but military talent, and, from his honesty of purpose, peculiarly fitted to be the tool of so crafty an intriguer, applied for leave to retain him for a short time longer. The two generals together prepared to lay siege to Oxford; but, after a short time, the king's march towards the eastern counties supplied a plea for reinvesting Cromwell with his former command, and despatching him into Cambridgeshire, where his influence was great, for the purpose of opposing Charles's efforts.

Before Charles quitted Oxford, to join Rupert, he had, probably in the hope of distracting his enemies by a division of the royal forces, despatched the prince of Wales, then a boy of fifteen, with the title of generalissimo, to the western counties, with Hyde, Colepepper, and lord Capel, as his council. He never saw his son again, who now took the nominal command of Goring's army, which was besieging Taunton with an apparent certainty of success. The king himself had stormed Leicester, making prisoners of the numerous garrison, and was advancing towards Oxford, which he believed to be in danger, when at Naseby, in Northamptonshire, he unexpectedly found himself close to the forces of Fairfax and Cromwell, who, alarmed by his progress, had again united in search of him. They were greatly superior to him in numbers, for he had little more than 8000 men; and his most prudent advisers counselled him to avoid a battle till he could be joined by reinforcements, some of which were known to be on their way from Wales, while others might reasonably be expected from the west as soon as Taunton had fallen. Unhappily the advice of Rupert, always eager for battle, prevailed, and it was resolved to fight. The 14th of June beheld the last battle of any importance that took place between the rival parties. It was stubbornly contested in every part of the field, except where Rupert charged at the head of his cavalry. As usual nothing could resist him; but, as usual, he pursued his routed enemies too far. Charles, too, fought as a king should fight, whose kingdom is at stake; and when Rupert returned from the chase he found all in disorder, save where the king himself was still trying to rally his disheartened troopers

A.D. 1643.

for one charge. Charles might have succeeded, he might at least have found an honourable death, when one of his courtiers, lord Carnwath, seized probably with a sudden panic, with the exclamation that he was "running upon his death," seized the bridle of his horse, arrested his onward course, and changed his courage (he was ever the too easy slave of impulse) to despair. Then all was confusion and dismay. The number of those on the royal side who fell in the battle was less than that of those who had fallen in the ranks of the parliament; but the rout was total, the pursuit long, and pursuers pitiless. Nearly half the defeated army, all the standards, and all the artillery fell into their hands; and they showed how little they deserved their victory by murdering and mangling even the women who had followed in the wake of the royal troops.

CHAPTER XLI.

CHARLES I. (CONTINUED.)



E may pass rapidly over the rest of the war, which was, in effect, terminated by this blow. Without delay Fairfax marched to the west to subdue the strongholds still remaining to the king in that district. Town after town surrendered; and even Rupert, who had thrown himself into Bristol, found it impossible to preserve that important city. Charles, after one or two marches and countermarches, retired to Oxford, where he remained during the winter, while the prince of Wales made his escape from the kingdom, and joined the queen, who, in the preceding autumn, had fled to Paris.

The king's council prevailed on him to make fresh proposals of peace to the parliament; but, though that body had lately caused its numbers to be filled up by issuing fresh writs to the places, the representatives of which adhered to the king, the independents were in no wise weakened by the influx of new members, and they prevailed so completely, that his messengers were refused admittance into the city. Success had only stimulated their ferocity. They now sequestered all the property of the Royalists, sold the estates of the bishops, and, by a decree of unheard-of atrocity, forbade any quarter to be given to any of the Irish in the king's service, who henceforth were slain by hundreds in cold blood. Charles offered to go to London in person to treat; but, in spite of the

A.D. 1646.

efforts of the Presbyterians, this offer too was refused, the ostensible plea for this refusal being the negotiations into which, through the agency of lord Glamorgan, he had entered with the Irish Roman Catholics to come to his assistance. It had also happened that among the booty taken at Naseby was a copy of much of the correspondence of Charles with his queen, from which it appeared that he had also sought aid from the continental sovereigns; and that, if he were guided by the queen, as it was always probable would be the case, he would never make peace, as long as war afforded him a chance of the re-establishment of his authority. At last, in utter despair, he quitted Oxford in disguise, and, by the advice of Montreuil, the French ambassador, who had been negotiating with the leaders of the Scots, to secure him a safe retreat in that country, he repaired to the camp of lord Leven, near Newark, where he soon discovered that he was regarded as a prisoner. Leven marched northwards with his prize, whose position only aggravated the dissensions between the rival factions in the parliament, till Charles began to hope, and Cromwell to fear, that the presbyterians would unite with him, and restore him to liberty. Bitter feelings were engendered on both sides. At last the independents prevailed, and caused several of the presbyterian regiments to be disbanded; while the Scottish covenanters, to disguise their real hopes and designs, began to treat their enemies with a severity of which as yet there had been no example in this war, executing the noblest of Montrose's comrades as traitors. The king himself they compelled to listen to their preachers, in order, as they said, that he might be instructed in the right way; and these lectures were only terminated by the arrival of an embassy from the parliament offering him peace on condition of his adopting the covenant, abolishing episcopacy, surrendering the command of the army and navy for twenty years, and proclaiming nearly a hundred of his most faithful friends traitors, for their allegiance to him. Humiliating as these demands were, every one, even Montreuil, speaking the sentiments of the queen, advised him to submit; but he could not resolve to humble himself so far, and, to the great joy of the independents, who had most unwillingly been compelled to join in the proposal of these terms, he refused them, again demanding leave to go to London to confer in person with the parliament.

Meanwhile the question, how he should be disposed of, raised a fresh dispute. The Scotch army was on the point of retiring to their own country, and the assembly voted that, if he would not take the covenant, he should be refused an asylum; at the same time the army demanded a large sum from the English parliament as arrears of pay. The parliament voted that they alone had the right to dispose of the king, and at last the Scots agreed to deliver

A.D. 1647.

him up to them on receiving 200,000*l.*, about one-third of the amount which they had originally claimed.

At the beginning of 1647 this bargain, almost equally disgraceful to both the contracting parties, was completed, by the surrender of the captive monarch to the parliamentary commissioners. At first he was conveyed to Holmby Castle, in Northamptonshire, and the presbyterian party hoped, now that the war was manifestly over, to succeed in procuring the disbanding of the greater part of the army; but Cromwell now began openly to exert his influence to disparage the parliament. He and his friends tampered with the regiments destined to be sent to Ireland, so that they objected to go: and at last the whole army absolutely refused to lay down their arms, and thus asserted their entire independence of any superior authority.

The king was treated with perfect respect, but rigorously watched. Essex, who would probably have been inclined to be active in his cause, had lately died, so opportunely for the independents, who could not conceal their exultation at the event, that many accused them of having poisoned him; and as the lords and the presbyterian party in the commons showed signs of being inclined to court a more intimate connexion with his majesty, Cromwell resolved by a bold stroke to anticipate their designs. At the beginning of June a coarse ruffian, named Joyce, originally a tailor, but now one of Cromwell's trusted officers, arrived at Holmby accompanied by a troop of horse, and compelled the king to accompany him into Cambridgeshire, the chief seat, as has been already said, of Cromwell's influence. The indignation of parliament knew no bounds. In vain did Cromwell call heaven and earth to witness that he was not privy to what had taken place; they had ample proof of his perjury, but felt themselves now wholly in his power, and dared not proceed against him. In fact, a few days later he instigated the army to demand the impeachment of the chiefs of the presbyterian party, and, hopeless of defending themselves, Hollis and his friends retired from parliament.

Meantime the army had been moving from town to town, carrying the king along with them, till they arrived at Reading, and for a short time he was treated with unusual indulgence, being permitted to confer with his friends, and to see those of his children who were still in England. Ever sanguine, he began to hope that the army would terminate its disputes with the parliament by restoring him to his liberty and power, and his delusion was furthered by the language addressed by Cromwell to some of his friends, in which he spoke with apparent enthusiasm of the king's virtues, of his own appreciation of them, and prayed that God might measure his goodness to him by his sincerity towards his majesty.

He did not yet dare to throw off the mask. The treatment by the army of the king on one side, and of the parliament on the other, had caused great discontent; great riots took place in the city, and, at Westminster, the mob forced its way into the house, and insisted on a vote being passed in favour of Charles's return. The officers, as a body, prepared fresh conditions to be submitted to his acceptance, far more moderate than the last, but Charles, who had accurate information of what had passed, was led by it to conceive fresh hopes, and to entertain delusive opinions of his importance to both parties, and refused them more peremptorily than before; being even unwise enough to let Ireton, Cromwell's son-in-law, see the expectations which he cherished, and openly telling him that the army would not be able to do without him. Ireton had a clearer understanding of the real state of the case. "Sir," said he to the king, "you desire to act as if you were the arbiter between us and the parliament; but we mean to be the arbiters between you and the parliament." In fact they were determined to be more, for Cromwell and his agents had so excited the mob to threaten the parliament, that a day or two afterwards, a large body of the members of both houses, with both their speakers, repaired to the army to seek its protection. Again did Charles's sanguine spirit look on this event as one favourable to his ultimate prospects, because he heard that the members who remained behind had elected new speakers; that they had unanimously voted him an invitation to return to London; and that the apprentices of the city, as a body, had declared in his favour. So unable was he to perceive, not however being in this respect more blind than the presbyterian leaders, that affairs were no longer in a state in which they could be determined by a body which had neither weapons to wield, nor resolution to wield them if it had possessed them. Cromwell judged more truly when he pronounced that in two days the city would be in the power of the army; and within the time thus predicted, the army entered the metropolis, bringing back the members who had fled, in triumph to their seats.

These events greatly encouraged the independents, and the republican projects, which all of them, except Cromwell, cherished, were every day more openly avowed. Cromwell was playing a surer game; he allowed Charles to remove to Hampton Court, where he surrounded him with spies, and where he himself and Ireton had frequent interviews with him, and imposed on him in a way which, to us who judge after the events, appears perfectly marvellous, till they actually persuaded him to refuse the offers which the presbyterian party in parliament (strengthened by the arrival of some of the chief noblemen from Scotland) caused to be again made to him. To what extent Cromwell really intended at

A.D. 1648.

this time to preserve Charles any remnant of ostensible authority, as a puppet in his hands, can hardly be decided. He had of late openly avowed designs utterly subversive of the monarchy, and had clearly, for some time, entertained views of his own aggrandizement, incompatible with the preservation of any real power to the king; but, though he had, before Marston Moor, ostentatiously declared that he would as lief pistol the king as a common trooper; it is not improbable that he had not yet become so completely callous to crime, but that he would have been willing to be spared the guilt of Charles's death, if his life could have been made consistent with his own enjoyment of power. He now found that this could not be. By the help of his spies he intercepted a letter from Charles to his queen, in which Charles told her that he was courted by both factions, the presbyterians and the army, but that he thought he should ultimately decide in favour of the presbyterians. From this time forth Cromwell determined to put him to death, and pursued his resolution with the most remorseless and unfaltering steadiness. The king was now deprived of the liberty of seeing his trusted advisers; his confinement was gradually made more strict and rigorous, till he was terrified into an attempt at escaping from Hampton Court, which was carefully rendered practicable. On the 11th of November he fled, and arrived in the Isle of Wight, trusting partly to the promises of astrologers, and partly to the fact that the uncle of colonel Hammond, the governor, had been one of his chaplains; but he soon found that Carisbrook Castle, which was assigned him as a residence, was a closer prison than that which he had left. And now Cromwell's language began openly to menace his life; nor were such threats confined to him. On the 9th of January, 1648, Joyce, the same man who had carried him off from Holmby, announced to sir John Berkeley that it was decided to bring Charles to trial. Berkeley implored his master to escape, and a vessel in the employ of the queen was hovering so near the island that it seemed possible for him to do so; but again he was engaged in negotiations with the presbyterians and the Scots, and was once more so misled by vain hopes, as to refuse the last means of safety offered to him. Yet he rejected the proposals submitted to him, and once more demanded to treat in person with the parliament.

Cromwell and Ireton now threw off the mask, and led the parliament to declare that they would hold no further communication with the king; but, though their party were a majority in the house (I should rather say had overborne the majority), they were a decided minority in the country. Many of the counties sent up remonstrances against the way in which the king was treated; plots were formed for his escape; the cry of "God save the king" was

heard in the streets; and at last the parliament itself, encouraged by all these signs of discontent, recovered their courage, voted that the form of government should not be changed, and that fresh proposals of peace should be offered to the king, while the Scottish parliament determined that 40,000 men should be raised, to defend him and his royal authority against the republicans and independents. In Wales, too, the cavaliers, being joined by many presbyterian officers, who had served in the parliamentary army, again raised the royal standard; and the danger in that country appeared so pressing that Cromwell, whose desire to expel all the moderate members of the house by force of arms was overruled by Fairfax, himself quitted London at the head of several thousand men to check it. Other risings took place in different counties; the fleet, too, declared for the king; the presbyterians in parliament took courage, and recalled Hollis, Maynard, and the other members whom the army a few months before had forced them to expel. The difficulties which surrounded him exasperated the generally humane disposition of Fairfax, and, to his lasting disgrace, when he took Colchester, which did not surrender till August, he caused sir Charles Lucas, sir George Lisle, and sir Bernard Gascoyne, three knights of the highest character, to be shot for defending it.

Meanwhile the Scots, under the duke of Hamilton, had crossed the border with 14,000 men, and Cromwell, who had already put down the rising in Wales, marched northward with great rapidity, being joined by other troops on his road, and encountered them at Wigan.* A most stubborn conflict ensued; but, in the end, the Scots were completely defeated. He pursued them into Scotland, where he re-established lord Argyll and the more violent party in power, and then hastened back to England, where events, very adverse to his views, had taken place. Encouraged by his absence, the parliament had decided on opening fresh negotiations with the king, and, in the middle of September, fifteen commissioners were sent to the Isle of Wight to confer with him on the restoration of peace. On his own side Charles managed the discussion himself with a degree of ability which excited both the admiration and astonishment of many of the commissioners: he agreed to nearly all the concessions demanded of him; but still refused to consent to the abolition of episcopacy, and the denunciation of his own chief supporters as traitors. On the 28th of November the commissioners quitted the Isle of Wight, bearing with them definitive

* It is said that on this occasion the name of Whig first came into use. Some of the most zealous of the Covenanters, encouraged by Cromwell's presence in the country, rose against the Royalists; and their rising was called the rising of the Whigamores, from the Whigam, used by the peasants to encourage their horses; and from this the abbreviated name Whig was given to the party opposed to the court.

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offers from the king, embracing the most ample concessions on every point, except the two above mentioned; and some of the presbyterian members of the commons made a formal motion, which was supported by the whole strength of their party, and even by some who had previously been ranked among the independents, that the king's offers were sufficient to ensure the safety of the kingdom. Only a week before the army had presented a petition demanding that the king should be brought to trial, and the independents had moved that they should be thanked for their bold counsels, but had been defeated by a great majority; so that there seemed fair grounds for hope that, on this occasion also, the more moderate party would prevail; but before the debate, which was adjourned more than once, could be concluded, Cromwell prevented the possibility of any vote favourable to the king being effectual, by sending a body of soldiers to Carisbrook, who carried him off by force to Hurst, a small castle on the coast of Hampshire. The news of this violence caused the greatest indignation in the parliament; or, it should rather be said, in the house of commons, for the house of lords had almost ceased to sit; and a fresh motion was made condemning it in the strongest terms. To his great honour, Prynne, who in former times had suffered almost greater persecution than any man in England from Laud and the Star Chamber, now exerted all his eloquence to persuade the house to a defiance of the army and a reconciliation with the king. His arguments convinced his hearers, and the motion was carried by a considerable majority. The debate had lasted all night, and it was nine in the morning of the 5th of December when the division took place; the last independent act of the parliament. When the members were about to reassemble the next day, they found the militia, which had been assigned them as a guard, removed, two regiments of regular cavalry and infantry occupying all the approaches to the house, and colonel Pride, the commander of one of them, with a body of troopers at the door, who seized all the leaders of the moderate party, and prevented them from entering. Upwards of forty were thus excluded; but, as that was found to be insufficient, the same scene was repeated the next day, till the assembly was reduced to less than seventy members, all prepared for the most violent measures that could be proposed. A fanatical preacher, named Hugh Peters, addressed a blasphemous sermon to the scanty remnant thus left; and then Cromwell made a short speech in his usual manner, calling God to witness that he had been in no respect privy to what had been done, though he rejoiced at it, and thought it well done.

The end was approaching; his will was now irresistible; and he had determined to proceed without delay in the course which

he had marked out for himself. To show his pretensions the more unmistakeably, he took possession of the king's apartments at Whitehall, and a day or two afterwards, on the 17th of December, the king was removed from Hurst on his way to Windsor. He arrived there on the 23rd, and the same day the commons voted that he should be brought to trial, and appointed a committee to draw up the accusation against him; but when they sent the bill up to the peers, that body, in a fuller house than had of late been usual (twelve of its members being assembled to debate on the fate of their sovereign), rejected it unanimously. The commons, therefore, were forced to proceed on their own vote alone; and having passed a resolution that they, as the representatives of the people of England, possessed sovereign power, proceeded to arrange the preparations for the trial. The entire number of members who thus arrogated to themselves the whole government of the kingdom, and a right which had never been claimed before by the very wildest democrats, was only fifty-three; and though the commissioners, whom they named to sit as judges, amounted to 135, scarcely half of that number ever sat.

The 20th of January was the day appointed for the trial to commence in Westminster Hall; but, as if to mark that it was a mere form, and that the king's destruction was unalterably determined, on the 17th persons were sent to take an inventory of all the property in the royal palaces, which were pronounced to be from that time forth the property of the parliament.

On the 19th Charles was brought to London, and lodged in St. James's Palace, closely guarded; and the next day he was conducted between two ranks of soldiers to Westminster Hall. A lawyer of the name of Bradshaw, a man of no eminent reputation, though considered a skilful lawyer, had been appointed president of the court; and a barrister, named Coke, had been selected, as the attorney-general of the house, to conduct the prosecution.

Charles behaved with kingly dignity; and, justly denying the authority of the court, and the legality of the house of commons arrogating to themselves alone the title of the parliament, while the peers refused to agree to their measures, he refused to plead. Three days was this scene repeated, while the impression made by the king's firmness, was so great and so general that the number of his judges daily decreased, and the sympathy of the mob, and even of the soldiers, became daily greater. Each day, as he retired, the populace had raised the cry of "God save the king." At last even a soldier ventured to express a similar prayer, and was severely beaten by his officer. Then for the first time Charles remonstrated. "Sir," said he to the officer, "the punishment, methinks, exceeds the offence." In many quarters strong efforts

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were made to save him. The prince of Wales wrote to Fairfax, offering to concede everything which had ever been demanded of his father; an embassy from Holland arrived to remonstrate; while the Scottish commissioners made an official protest, in the name of their entire kingdom, against the proceedings of the court. At last, on the 25th, the court pronounced the king guilty of high treason, in having waged war against the parliament; and on the 27th he was brought before them to receive his sentence.

On that day the sitting, as usual, began by calling over the names of the members. When that of Fairfax was called, and he did not reply, a female voice exclaimed loudly, "He has more wit than to be here." Presently, when Bradshaw, rising to address the king, declared himself to be speaking on behalf of the people of England, the same voice cried out, "Of not the hundredth part of them." The officers bade the soldiers fire into the seat from whence such audacious words had proceeded; but it was found that lady Fairfax was the speaker. The king now demanded a conference in the painted chamber with both houses of parliament, and some of the judges were inclined to grant his demand, had they not been borne down by the violence and threats of Cromwell. While his demand was being discussed Charles was exposed to all the insults of the soldiers, who were excited to offer them by the most brutal of their officers. Some smoked in his face; others reviled him; one even spat on him. He bore all these insults with a meek dignity, which scarcely permitted even his contempt for them to be seen; and when, after sentence of death had been pronounced upon him, and while he was being conducted back to St. James's, the soldiers insulted him with loud cries of "Justice," "Execution," the only remark that they extorted from him was, that for a shilling they would raise the same cry against their own officers.

He now refused to see any one except those of his children, the duke of Gloucester and the princess Elizabeth, who were still in England, and Juxon, bishop of London, who administered to him the consolations of religion. On the 29th the judges met for the last time to fix the next day for his death. At that last moment some recoiled with remorse from the horrid deed which they had hitherto sanctioned, and could scarcely be retained by force in the room where the death-warrant lay to be signed. Those who did sign it were for the most part so agitated that their signatures were scarcely legible. Cromwell alone endeavoured, by a gaiety strangely at variance with his usual demeanour, to conceal the disquietude which troubled even his own callous breast at the thoughts of the irrevocable deed of guilt which he was committing and forcing others to commit. He dragged one man to the table, and

compelled him to sign by guiding his hand, spirted the ink into the face of another, joked and laughed with forced and unnatural mirth;

"And for brief time of all the crowd,
As he was loudest of the loud,
Seemed gayest of the gay."*

On the 30th of January Charles rose early in the morning. He had slept tranquilly, and he now dressed himself with care, putting on rather more clothes than usual, lest if he should tremble, as the weather was cold, his enemies should impute his tremor to fear. Juxon soon arrived, and began to pray with him. As he began to read the chapter of St. Matthew which records the death of our Saviour, the king asked him whether he had selected it as especially applicable to his own situation, and was greatly affected at being told it was the regular lesson appointed for the day. At ten the guards came to conduct him to Whitehall. There he received the communion from Juxon, though some ministers of the independents tried to disturb his last moments with their intrusion. At one o'clock he was conducted to the scaffold, erected in front of the palace at Whitehall. He had intended to address a short speech to the people, but Cromwell had so surrounded him with soldiers that he could not be heard; so he contented himself with a few words to Juxon and Tomlinson, the captain of the guard, justifying himself from the charge of having been the cause of the late troubles, and bidding the bishop deliver his dying blessing to his wife and children; then, having laid his head upon the block, he said a short prayer, gave the fatal signal, and was beheaded at one blow by an executioner carefully disguised and masked. He, raising the bleeding head, proclaimed it to be the head of a traitor; but the multitude broke through the files of soldiers to dip their handkerchiefs in his blood, and to preserve them as memorials of one whose unparalleled injuries had effaced from their minds all recollection of his early misgovernment.

It is needless to dilate on the foulness of this atrocious and unprecedented crime, which all ages and all parties have condemned. It is sufficient to point out that it was in no sense the act of the nation, but of a small section of the independents, instigated and supported by an almost equally small portion of the army. It may, indeed, be stated to have been wholly the act of Cromwell. He it was who declared some time before that he would cut off Charles's head with the crown upon it; he it was who intimidated the court in pronouncing sentence, and afterwards into signing the death warrant; and, perhaps, in spite of all that had previously taken place, no influence short of that possessed by his powerful will could have been sufficient to do so.

* Lord of the Isles, ii. 2.

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Of the character of Charles we have already spoken. He had many eminent virtues, and was not without considerable talents. He had also some great faults, and many grievous errors had been instilled into his mind by a most foolish and unprincipled father. As a private individual he would have been amiable and estimable, for he was humane, affectionate, and religious, while even one of his greatest faults, the proneness to be led by the advice of others, even when inferior to himself in capacity, is to some extent an attractive quality, at least in the eyes of those whose counsels are taken. But he cannot be said to have been a prudent, or a good, or a gracious king: not a good king, for he designed to make himself, what, indeed, he had been told from his youth that he had a right to be, an absolute sovereign; nor a prudent or gracious one, for when forced, bit by bit, to abandon his pretensions, he did it always with such reluctance, that his concessions lost all their merit in the eyes of his subjects, as being manifestly yielded only to their superior power. Whether, if he had been a prince of a different character, he would have avoided the misfortunes which have made his the most remarkable reign in our history, it may be difficult to decide. The concessions which, though unwillingly and ungraciously, he did make, afforded ample security for the rights and liberties of the people in future: yet they were wholly unable to avert civil war; and, from the moment that the war commenced, the republicans, a party at first probably limited to four to five enthusiasts, became gradually stronger, and more open in the assertion of their principles, some of them even avowing their designs against his life almost three years before his execution. Nor is it easy to decide when Cromwell first began to entertain the views which clearly actuated him during the last year of the reign. At first his object appears to have been the acquisition of rank and wealth, united, probably, with important military command; and we may, perhaps, believe that it was the progress of events, his gradual perception of his own pre-eminence of talents and energy, and of the superior power of his party, though this was greatly owing to himself, which by degrees enlarged his ambition, and led him to cherish projects of greater aggrandizement than at first could have seemed attainable.* If this judgment be correct, though talents such as Strafford's might have saved Charles, no degree or description of virtue could have had the same effect. Indeed, as it was, no act of his life can possibly be alleged which affords the very slightest plea for the sentence which, with the most impudent mockery of the forms of law ever perpetrated, was executed upon him. He certainly desired the possession of arbitrary power; but

* In the conditions agreed to by the house of commons, in December, 1645, as those on which peace might be made, it was stipulated that Cromwell was to be made a peer with an estate of 2500*l.* a year, a very considerable sum in those days.

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in practice his was the most humane government that at that time had ever been witnessed in Europe. Men were no longer put to death for their religious opinions. The use of torture, a favourite resource of Elizabeth, whom the puritans professed to hold in especial reverence, was abolished as illegal; even the taxes imposed by his own authority, though illegal, as being so imposed, were moderate in amount; and though the Star Chamber inflicted what would now be looked upon as atrocious punishments for slight offences, those punishments were not then considered unusually severe; at all events they were less cruel than those of the two last reigns. Scandalous as was the practice, in accordance with which Prynne and others lost their ears, even such mutilation was less cruel than that inflicted on Stubbs by queen Elizabeth for an offence even slighter than that of Prynne and his fellow-martyrs. And the charge that Charles had levied war upon the parliament was false; not only did Hotham, with the sanction of that assembly, close the gates of Hull against the king long before he raised his standard at Nottingham, but the two houses, by their own ordinance, call out the militia of the different counties many weeks before he began to levy any forces whatever for his separate service. He came of a long line of princes, not generally devoid of ability or of virtue, but most especially distinguished for the almost uninterrupted train of misfortunes that accompanied them; misfortunes that were not ended even with his life. It is as sad as it is singular that his father, the worst of the race, was the most prosperous; he himself, the most able and most virtuous, was of all the most unfortunate.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE COMMONWEALTH.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Ferdinand III.		Louis XIV.	Innocent X.	
Leopold . . .	1658	<i>Spain.</i> Philip IV.	Alexander VII.	1655

A.D.
1649.

HE death of the king did not of itself involve the destruction of the kingly power, and for a day or two some persons entertained the idea of proclaiming a new sovereign; but on the 7th of February, monarchy was abolished by a formal vote of the parliament; the house of

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lords was extinguished at the same time, though the dignity of the peerage was preserved; and an executive council of forty-one members, among whom of course was Cromwell, was appointed to conduct the business of the state. It soon appeared that these and the preceding measures of the last month were viewed with great general dissatisfaction. When the lord mayor was ordered to proclaim the new government in the city, he refused to obey; and of the executive council itself, though counting fourteen regicides among its members, only nineteen could by any means be brought to sign a declaration that they approved of the execution of the king, and of the abolition of the monarchy.

In the country the discontent was even more general. An oath of fidelity to the commonwealth, which was required of all the beneficed clergy, public functionaries, and members of the universities, was refused by thousands, and it was scarcely possible by any means to enforce the destruction of the emblems of royalty scattered throughout all the parishes of the country. The dominant party was exasperated by these events, and endeavoured to strike terror into its opponents by bringing some of the most eminent prisoners to trial for adhering to the king. The duke of Hamilton, lord Holland, and lord Capel were executed for this offence; and their deaths, especially that of Capel, greatly increased the general indignation; as Cromwell avowed that his reason for insisting on his execution was the eminence of his abilities and virtues, and the greatness of his consequent influence. Lord Norwich was included in the same accusation and condemnation, as was sir John Owen, who had long maintained the royal cause in Wales, after it had been despaired of in other districts. But lord Norwich was saved by the interest of his friends; and sir John, who, when sentence was pronounced upon him, had bowed his acknowledgments to the court, for, as he said, doing him, a plain Welsh country gentleman, the honour to behead him in such noble company, was rescued by the interposition of colonel Hutchinson, one of the king's judges, but virtuous and humane, though misled by fanaticism, who thought it hard that while so much interest was made to save the condemned lords, no one would speak a word for the commoner.

While these feelings of discontent were thus rife, they were on a sudden greatly inflamed by the publication of a book bearing the title of "Icon Basilike,"* professing to be the composition of the late king, during his imprisonment, but subsequently ascertained to be the work of a Dr. Gauden, who received the reward of a bishopric from Charles II. It purported to be a faithful transcript of Charles's feelings, and hopes, and disappointments, and sorrows,

* From two Greek words, *εἰκὼν βασιλική*, the image of a king.

during the last year of his life; and, being believed to be genuine, was sought with such avidity by all classes, that in spite of the zealous efforts of the government to suppress it, nearly 50,000 copies were sold in a single year. It was translated into French and several other continental languages; and everywhere produced so great an impression on its readers, that the executive council employed their secretary, a cousin of Bradshaw's, John Milton, (to whose name his poems have given a better merited immortality,) to write a reply to it. It was the beginning of a paper war which lasted for some time. Milton's pamphlet, which he called "Iconoclastes,"* was a production so lame as to provoke a rejoinder, on which Charles II. employed the pen of Salmasius, a professor at Leyden. Milton again replied to Salmasius, and Salmasius to Milton; till both sides found out that the contest between them was one which could only be decided by more effective weapons.

In some counties the discontent showed itself in actual insurrection; and in London, several of the regiments which had been selected to serve in Ireland refused to go, and broke out into open mutiny; one of the mutineers was shot, and his comrades and a large body of the citizens celebrated his funeral with a pomp that was easily perceived to be meant mainly as an insult to the parliament, which, in revenge, passed a set of very stringent laws against the press; and against all the Royalists and Roman Catholics, whom it banished from London; and so jealous did it show itself of all opposition, that even the services rendered by sir W. Waller in the civil war could not save him from its suspicions, and he was long detained in a sort of honourable confinement at Windsor.

While affairs were in this disturbed state in England, they were still worse in Ireland. Towards the end of the king's reign the pope had sent over a nuncio, named Rinuccini, whose rashness and violence had thrown the whole island into confusion; and the marquis of Ormond, the lord-lieutenant, being unable to make head against the rebels, had retired to France; but, after a time, the Roman Catholics themselves becoming disgusted with Rinuccini, expelled him; and so large a party of both religions invited Ormond to return that he did so, and exerted all his energies in the support of the royal cause, collecting a considerable army, and taking some important towns from the parliamentary generals. The progress which he made was so considerable, that Cromwell decided on going himself to arrest it; and, in August, crossed the Irish Channel at the head of a force fully equal to that under Ormond. Events favoured him as usual; before he landed, colonel Jones with

* From two Greek words, *ἰκάνω* and *κλάω*, to break.

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4000 men had surprised Ormond at Rathmines, near Dublin, and defeated him with great loss ; and Cromwell had little to do beyond reaping the fruits of his victory. He advanced at once into the heart of the country ; stormed Drogheda, then called Tredagh ; passing to the south he attacked Wexford, which capitulated ; and almost every town of importance followed its example. He sullied his triumph with an inhumanity of which no other wars that had ever devastated these islands afforded any example : the garrison of Drogheda amounted to 3000 men ; many fell in the assault, all the rest were butchered in cold blood by his express orders ; and numbers of the citizens with their wives and children shared the same fate, in which the fury of his soldiers involved even many of the supporters of the parliament. At Wexford he repeated the massacre ; at Gowran the common soldiers were spared, but every officer was murdered ; at Ross he even hung the bishop in his pontifical robes in revenge for the resistance made by the garrison of the castle ; and he reported these indiscriminate slaughters to the parliament in a despatch, the coolness of which is, if possible, more hideous than his cruelty. In the fanatical language so fashionable among his party, he spoke of these outrages on humanity as the righteous chastisements of God. His apologists since have assured us that he was not one who delighted in bloodshed, but that he looked upon success, at whatever price it might be purchased, as indispensable to his cause, and above all to the aggrandizement of his own fortune ; and that, therefore, in the grandeur of his ambitious selfishness, he was willing to gratify the passions of those who could contribute to that aggrandizement. If this be a justification, it is hard to see what crime has ever been committed which may not be justified by a similar plea ; but the truth is, that such atrocities are always as impolitic as they are flagitious ; and these massacres have not only transmitted his memory to posterity loaded with everlasting infamy, but at the time they created a wide-spread abhorrence of him, which not only is still preserved in the traditions of the lower orders of the Irish, who recognize no more bitter imprecation on the head of their deadliest enemy than the curse of Cromwell, but which gave rise to many of the plots and conspiracies by which his whole life was disquieted.

Had it not been for his success in Ireland, Charles, who was at this time in Jersey, would probably have crossed over to that island to put himself at the head of Ormond's army ; but these disasters put an end to that design, and, as the Scots offered to acknowledge him for their king on the condition of his subscribing the covenant, after much deliberation he determined on repairing to that kingdom. Nor was he diverted from his purpose by the misfortunes of Montrose, who, in the mean time, having received from him a renewal

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of his commission as captain-general of Scotland, had landed in Caithness with a small army, but was overpowered by a superior force, under general Lesley, which the Scottish parliament sent against him; his troops were routed, and he himself, vainly endeavouring to escape in disguise, was betrayed to his enemies. The earl of Argyll, the hereditary enemy of his family, was eager to revenge on his prisoner the disgrace which he himself had sustained at Inverlochy, and easily prevailed on the parliament, composed of course wholly of presbyterians, to bring him to trial for apostasy from the covenant and for rebellion. It was easy to procure the conviction and condemnation of one who gloried in the exploits charged against him as crimes; and on the 21st of May he was hanged at Edinburgh, a book containing a record of his victories being fastened round his neck, which, as he told the executioner, he looked upon as a testimony in his honour, of which he was prouder than he had ever been of the collar of the garter: while, as according to the terms of his sentence, his head, and legs, and arms were to be stuck over the gates of the five principal cities in the kingdom, he expressed a wish that he had limbs enough to be sent to every city in Christendom, as a memorial of the righteous cause for which he was doomed and willing to suffer. Charles arrived in Scotland in June, 1650; but, instead of enjoying the power which he had anticipated, he found himself treated with great disrespect, being constantly exposed to long harangues on the impurity of his faith as a member of an episcopal church, and to still more irksome lectures on the greater impurities of his conduct; and at last, as he began to doubt even of his personal safety if he ventured to assert his own independence, he not only proclaimed his adherence to the covenant, but declared his belief also that the calamities which had befallen his family were just judgments from Heaven for the idolatry of his mother, and the sin of his father in tolerating that idolatry, and in becoming a shedder of innocent blood.

A career that began thus shamefully could hardly be expected to proceed honourably, and did not deserve to end happily; but his conduct so far propitiated the leaders of the Scottish parliament, that they assembled an army, under Lesley, to fight in his defence against Cromwell, who, having been appointed captain-general of England, on Fairfax's resignation of that command, was now preparing to invade Scotland. Lesley had 16,000 men, and being a skilful and prudent general, had occupied a strong position near Dunbar, which defied Cromwell's efforts to bring him to action; and want of provisions and supplies of all kinds was reducing Cromwell to such distress, that he was on the point of commencing an ignominious and disastrous retreat, when the Scottish clergy,

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having, as they declared, received a revelation from the Lord that He had delivered Agag into their hands, compelled their general to quit his vantage-ground, and descend into the plain to engage Cromwell. Cromwell's troops were only half the number of their enemies, but he attacked them while in disorder, routed them completely, and took possession of Edinburgh as the fruit of his victory.

So great were the divisions in Scotland, that Charles looked on this event as fortunate for himself. Even after the abolition of episcopacy, religious differences still divided the whole nation into hostile parties, and he had found himself little better than a prisoner in the hands of the more violent fanatics, who imputed the defeat at Dunbar to their omission hitherto to purge the court and the army of the profane, as they called all who differed from themselves, and who now proceeded to obviate the recurrence of a similar disaster by compelling Charles to discard all his personal friends and supporters. He attempted to escape from their hands; they discovered his retreat, and brought him back to Perth by force; but this open display of his resentment at their treatment of him alarmed them, and for the future they behaved to him with more deference, and for a while reconciled themselves with the presbyterians; Argyll himself, the leader of the violent party, being propitiated by overtures made to him by Charles, who professed a willingness to marry his daughter; and, on the 1st of January, 1651, Charles was crowned king at Scone, with the approbation, or at least the consent, of both factions.

Cromwell applied himself with great address, and not without success, to revive their dissensions; but the moderate party preserved the advantage which they had obtained, and the king's authority became in consequence more real. The Scotch parliament besought Charles to take the command of the army himself, an invitation which was very agreeable to him, as enabling him to fulfil a design, which he had for some time meditated, of invading England. The present seemed a favourable opportunity for the execution of such a plan; for Cromwell had been attacked by a violent fever, which caused great anxiety to his English partisans, and rendered it probable that he would not be able to continue at the head of the army; but he recovered in a few weeks, and the divisions in the Scottish councils, where the march to the south was greatly disapproved, delayed the starting of the expedition till the end of July, when Charles crossed the border, at the head of 12,000 or 14,000 men, with Lesley under him as his lieutenant-general.

Cromwell himself viewed this operation without concern, thinking that he should find it much easier to terminate the war at a

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blow in England than in Scotland; but in London it caused great and universal consternation, and a belief on the part of many people that it was the result of a secret understanding between him and the king. Charles, on his arrival at Carlisle, issued a proclamation, offering a general amnesty to the whole kingdom, with the sole exceptions of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Cook, to which the parliament replied by ordering it to be burnt by the common hangman, and by proclaiming him and his adherents guilty of high treason. Charles descended rapidly into the heart of the kingdom, and in three weeks reached Worcester, which he immediately occupied, intending to halt there, so as to give his adherents time to join him; but he had been greatly disappointed by the general indifference of the country to his cause, and by the very scanty reinforcements which joined him in his march. Apprehension of the power of the parliament deterred many of his well-wishers from making any open exertion in his favour; the vigorous measures and well-concerted operations of Cromwell rendered abortive the hasty enterprises of others; while others were disgusted, or repelled by the senseless fanaticism of the Scotch clergy, who still followed the army, and who, finding that Massey, a general formerly distinguished in the service of the parliament, but now a zealous officer of the young king, was rallying men of all persuasions in the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire around the royal standard, apprehended another judgment of God, like that which they had experienced at Dunbar, if they allowed Papists and Episcopalians to unite with them, and required him to publish a declaration that he would accept of the services of no one who hesitated to take an oath of fidelity to the covenant.

Within a week from the day on which Charles reached Worcester Cromwell overtook him there, with an army nearly trebling the royal force in numbers, and still more superior in equipments, in experience, in the skill of their general, and in the confidence derived from a continued series of success. He determined to storm the city. On the evening of the 2nd September, he crossed the Severn with a strong division; and at daybreak on the 3rd, the anniversary of the battle of Dunbar, he began to batter the walls with his artillery. Charles sallied forth, at the head of nearly all his army, to attack his camp on the left bank of the river, which he expected to find weakly defended; but Cromwell, perceiving his design, returned with speed, and took the command in person. A desperate conflict, as severe, according to Cromwell's own words as any that he had ever witnessed, took place, and lasted for several hours. Charles displayed the most brilliant courage; but at the most important crisis of the battle, Lesley, though commanded by him to charge with his cavalry, remained immovable. "Oh, for

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one hour of Montrose!" cried an English Cavalier, who saw with dismay a most favourable opportunity wantonly thrown away; but no Montrose was there; and 3000 Scottish horsemen, apparently the flower of the army, saw the battle lost without striking one blow to save it. At last the royal regiments which did fight exhausted their ammunition. Cromwell, by a desperate charge, threw them into disorder, and drove them back into the city in such confusion, that the king was forced to dismount and seek an entrance on foot as his only means of escaping capture. A small troop of fifty or sixty gentlemen formed themselves into a body-guard for the defeated prince, with whom he passed through Worcester, and took the road to the north; but he was hotly pursued, and it was thought necessary that he should separate from this devoted band, and seek his safety alone. No hope remained for him in the island; but the coast was so carefully watched in every part, that it was difficult to quit it. For six weeks he wandered over his kingdom, encountering every kind of danger, and avoiding them by the most romantic adventures; sometimes disguised as a woodman, as a groom, or as a woman; hiding in trees, and cellars, and in the secret recesses constructed in times of religious persecution for the shelter of fugitive priests; till at last he found a vessel, the captain of which undertook to convey him safely across the Channel, and in which he embarked at Shoreham, and landed in Normandy, after upwards of forty persons had been privy to his concealment, not one of whom, though they were mostly of low rank, and in needy circumstances, and though the parliament offered a large reward for his capture, dreamt for a single moment of betraying him.

The parliament showered vast rewards upon Cromwell, assigning him Hampton Court for his residence, with a pension of 4000*l.* a year, and distributing proportionate rewards among his officers; but, though he himself, in the canting language which he so much affected, called the victory a crowning mercy, which eminently deserved the gratitude of parliament towards that Supreme Being, who thus had manifested his approbation of their new form of government, he did not display his own thankfulness by making a merciful use of his success, but put lord Derby and the noblest of his prisoners to death, and sold thousands of the common soldiers to be carried from their native land, and worked as slaves in the plantations of the West Indies, or the mines of Africa.

On all public occasions Cromwell behaved with an ostentatious modesty, but in his general conduct he could not help displaying the elation of his soul to such a degree, that Hugh Peters predicted that he was intending to make himself king. And he very soon began to sound those whose aid was indispensable to such a design,

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but was disappointed to find that, though most of them thought a return to monarchy desirable, not one of them suggested that he should be the monarch, but looked rather to the duke of Gloucester, the youngest son of the late king, as less pledged than his elder brothers to enmity to all the members and measures of the parliament; so he laid the design aside for a time, and occupied himself with foreign politics, in which he earned a far nobler reputation than was merited by his conduct in domestic affairs, either as a subject or as a ruler.

The attitude which the commonwealth, under his guidance, assumed towards foreign nations was one of conscious strength and real dignity. Its chiefs announced their intention of maintaining all existing treaties with other states, and of preserving peace to the utmost of their power; and, beyond this avowal, they did not choose to make any advance in the way of courting alliances, lest such a proceeding should look like consciousness of needing support. The execution of the king had produced a profound impression in every country in Europe, as an enormity not only unprecedented, but never before contemplated even in the wildest rebellion; still there was so much resolution, so great an appearance of power in the act, that foreign nations feared to break with the rulers who had done it, and yet were ashamed at first to sanction it by acknowledging them. For a while they hesitated. Spain was the first to take a decided line and to accredit its ambassador to the infant commonwealth. France was unable to decide with equal promptness. Its own government was weak, the whole country was torn asunder by faction, and, besides that, the court was especially bound to the English Royalists by the near relationship of queen Henrietta to Louis XIV. She and her son found an asylum at Paris, and received a pension from the king, but the sympathy of cardinal Mazarin, the minister, went no further, nor would he hold out to Charles any expectation of assistance towards the recovery of his hereditary rights, nor did he even afford him any positive recognition of them. Even the shelter that was afforded to the fugitive princess gave umbrage to the rulers of the Commonwealth; some rough passages took place between the two parliaments, and in was very generally expected on the Continent that Cromwell was about to invade France. At last, when the death of the prince of Orange disappointed the scheme, which Mazarin had formed, of uniting with Holland against Spain and England, the cardinal, after balancing long between what he considered the dictates of honour and of prudence, began to see the desirableness of acknowledging the Commonwealth. In a most characteristic memorial on the subject which he addressed to the queen, for Louis XIV. was, as yet, only a boy, he urges

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that though nothing could be more injurious to the king's reputation than his abandonment of his cousin Charles; and though nothing could be more iniquitous than his recognition of usurpers whose hands were stained with the blood of their sovereign; yet, as honour and justice ought never to dictate any thing imprudent, it might be desirable to recognize them; still cherishing a secret hope that, at a future time, a more honourable line of conduct might be practicable; yet, as it would be the most injurious of all things to the king's fame to commit a base action without getting any good by it, he recommends the sending an agent to England to ascertain that his advances will not be received with indifference. At first his agent failed, partly perhaps because Cromwell was, at the same time, by means of secret agents, intriguing with De Retz and the leaders of the Fronde; but at last all difficulties were removed, Louis wrote a letter to Cromwell with his own hand, and in December official relations were re-established between the two countries.

With Holland war at first appeared inevitable. The stadtholder, the prince of Orange, was married to a daughter of Charles I., and did not disguise his indignation at his execution. Rupert, as admiral of the young king's fleet, fitted out ships in the Dutch ports, with which he carried on a piratical sort of warfare in the Channel, taking and pillaging the British merchantmen, till, in the spring of 1650, the parliament provided a powerful squadron to protect the coast, giving the command to Blake and other officers, as yet only known as brave soldiers, but who soon acquired considerable maritime experience, and earned an undying naval reputation. Blake chased Rupert from the Channel to Portugal, blockaded him in the mouth of the Tagus, from thence he drove him to Malaga, and from the Mediterranean to the western coast of Africa; and returned in triumph, claiming the honour of having established the maritime supremacy of England. But, in December, 1650, the stadtholder died, after a few day's illness, and, as it was believed that those who succeeded to the government entertained very different views, the leaders of the Commonwealth sent an embassy to the Hague, with St. John at its head, in the hope of cementing an alliance with a people whose constitution was so similar to that which they had themselves established. Some of the more visionary of their body even entertained the impracticable idea of uniting the two nations into one republic; but the Dutch populace shared the feelings of their deceased prince, and insulted the ambassadors. St. John returned to England, indignant at the treatment which he had received, and which he endeavoured to excite Cromwell to avenge by war. Cromwell was contented with a more pacific hostility; with strong remonstrances, and with the Act

of Navigation, which was rapidly passed through parliament, and, which, though apparently restricting equally the right of all nations to import the produce of other countries into England, was, in fact, aimed chiefly at, and was chiefly injurious to the Dutch, whose wealth was derived, in a great degree, from that kind of traffic.

The victory of Worcester, however, produced the same effect upon the Dutch as upon the French, and made them also decide on courting the alliance of a government which now seemed to be completely established; but the English rulers, though secretly pleased, displayed such arrogance towards their ambassadors, who in their turn were insulted by the London mobs, as held out but little hopes of any cordial union between the countries, mutually jealous of each other's maritime pretensions; and while affairs were in this feverish state, an accidental encounter between Blake and the Dutch admiral, Van Tromp, put an end to all prospects of peace, and both nations made great exertions to carry on the war with vigour. One hundred and five ships were soon placed under the command of Blake, who, sailing towards the Orkneys to attack the Dutch engaged in the herring fishery, was pursued by Van Tromp with 120 vessels; but the battle for which both fleets were anxious was prevented by a terrible storm, in which the Dutch were the greatest sufferers. Tromp returned home and resigned his command; De Ruyter, who succeeded him, was defeated, and Tromp resumed his previous station. So great were the expectations formed on his reappointment, that Charles himself desired earnestly to be allowed to serve as a volunteer on board his flag-ship, but this offer was refused. Tromp compelled Blake to retire into the Thames, and then sailed up and down the Channel with a broom at his mainmast, in token that he had swept the sea of his enemies; but, a couple of months afterwards, Blake, having received sufficient reinforcements, again put to sea, met the Dutch fleet off the isle of Portland, and in a conflict, which lasted three days, gave it a severe defeat.

But these efforts, though successful and glorious, were very costly. The parliament became distressed for funds to support them, and had recourse to the most atrocious confiscations of the estates belonging to those who had sided with the late king, or who were supposed to favour the pretensions of his son; and determined also to put up all the royal parks for sale. The money thus raised was to be applied to the maintenance of the fleet, a force of which they had no jealousy; at the same time they began to diminish the army, a measure to which Cromwell felt unable to object, though he saw plainly that it was intended as a blow at his own power. In fact, the hostility between him and the parliament was no longer

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concealed ; he attempted to procure its immediate dissolution, but was baffled, and that event was at last fixed for the winter of the year 1654 ; still, when fixed, he did not cease from his endeavours to anticipate it, nor they from theirs to postpone it.

Religious animosities were at the bottom of their enmity. The parliament had established presbyterianism as the national religion. Cromwell's party, composed of independents, Fifth Monarchy-men, and other fanatics, began to revile the presbyterians ; affirming, and indeed with truth, that they were as bigoted as Episcopalians or Roman Catholics. At last he instigated the army to address a violent remonstrance and petition to the parliament ; and, thinking that this display of his strength had diminished the danger of opposition, he again discussed with some of the leading men his project of assuming the throne. Whitelocke advised him to make a treaty with Charles. Calamy, a presbyterian minister of great influence in the city, told him openly that nine out of ten men throughout the kingdom would oppose him. Cromwell's reply evinced no disinclination for, or dread of, such a contest. "Suppose," said he, "I were to disarm the nine, and put a sword in the hand of the tenth?" It was very clear on which side would be the victory. In fact the parliament, by having engrossed all the power of the state, and by having made itself responsible for everything, had become very unpopular, and the opinion of its corrupt motives was almost universal.


This opinion it was insane enough to increase. In framing an act, under which the new parliament was to be elected, it provided that all the members of the existing parliament should retain their seats as a matter of right, and Cromwell, seeing that this encroaching attempt to perpetuate their power had given general offence, determined at once to dissolve them. As was usual with him, he affected the greatest reluctance to adopt a step which he represented as forced on him by the importunity of his friends, and the conviction of his duty to God. He declared that the thought of it made his hair stand on end ; that he had with tears besought God to excuse him from taking it ; that, had he his free choice, he would rather be torn in pieces than take it : but, when he had satisfied his hypocrisy by these professions, he proceeded to act with as much resolution and promptness as if he had no such scruples. On the 20th of April, 1653, he surrounded the house with his soldiers, entered it himself, repeated his statement of the affliction which he felt, of his unwillingness to do what necessity forbade him to delay ; then, changing his tone, he began to reproach the members with their selfishness, their indolence, their covetousness, their injustice, and, announcing that the Lord had done with them, bade them to begone, and make room for honest

people. Many refused to acknowledge his right to dissolve them. Harrison, one of the most fanatical of his officers, pulled the speaker from his chair. He himself called his soldiers into the apartment, and lifting up the mace, desired them to take away that bauble; then, loading many of the members with personal abuse, calling them drunkards, profligates, and cheats, he waited while his troops cleared the house, locked the door with his own hands, and, putting the key in his pocket, returned to Whitehall. The next day passers-by were amused by a placard fastened on the door by some wag, perhaps a Royalist delighted at the downfall of the assembly he had so much reason to detest, giving legible notice that the house contained "apartments to let, unfurnished."

The people in general looked upon what had been done with dissatisfaction: not that they regretted the parliament, which had long forfeited their esteem and their sympathy; but that they saw in its violent dissolution a fresh proof that the whole kingdom was at the mercy of the army. The supremacy of the army was synonymous with the supremacy of Cromwell; nor did he attempt to disguise this fact: for, having formed a new council of state, of which he himself was president, he affixed his own signature alone to the notices which it issued, and disregarded every law under which parliaments had hitherto been assembled by choosing all the members himself, and summoning them to meet, by his own authority, as captain-general of the Commonwealth. This assembly, called by some Barebone's parliament, from the absurd name, Praise God Barebone, assumed by one of its most insignificant members, and by others the little parliament, from its consisting of only 120 persons, speedily made itself odious to all classes; and after a short time a majority voted their own dissolution, and the minority, which resisted, was again turned out by force by Cromwell.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE COMMONWEALTH (CONTINUED).

ROMWELL conceived that the time was now come when he might openly assume the supreme authority. The name of king he did not venture to take; but, acting under his instructions, Lambert, one of his most trusted officers, proposed to his comrades to declare him protector of the kingdom. The proposal was unanimously agreed to; and, on the

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16th of December, 1653, a few days after the dissolution of the last parliament, a deputation of many of the chiefs of the army, the judges, and others, went in procession to Westminster Hall, where Cromwell was awaiting them, and entreated him to accept the office of Protector of the Commonwealth. He readily assented to their petition, and thenceforth took up his abode at Whitehall, the very palace which had been the scene of the execution of Charles.

The extreme republicans, and the most violent of the fanatics, unable to disguise from themselves that, by their aid, Cromwell had arrived at power which was sovereignty in every thing but name, were furious ; but their anger and resistance were unavailing. The Protector soon showed them that, whatever limitations he might have desired to place on the authority of Charles, he himself would admit of none. Harrison, for objecting to his domination, was, by his edict, deprived of his command, and banished from the metropolis ; Lilburne, who during the late session of parliament had been tried for sedition, and acquitted, he nevertheless detained in prison during the remainder of his life ; and others, who had no office of which they could be deprived, and who had the prudence to avoid the commission of any overt act which could possibly be made the subject of a prosecution, were, on the mere suspicion of disaffection to the new government, seized, and sold as slaves, to expiate their political heresy in the pestilential plantations of Barbadoes. He had other resources besides force. With those whom he thought it possible to cajole into submission he would closet himself for hours, lamenting with them, praying with them, crying with them, calling God to witness that, had he been permitted the choice, he would have preferred a shepherd's crook to the general's baton, and that it was only in obedience to the evident will of Providence that he had consented to be invested with his present authority. But there were some who could neither be intimidated by his severity, nor won by his caresses. The royalists, more exasperated than ever by his open assumption of the supreme power, began to form plots for his assassination, certainly with the privy of some of Charles's courtiers, if not of Charles himself ; and though Cromwell, who had spies on all their actions, was informed of these conspiracies in time to baffle them and to punish the conspirators, yet the knowledge of their persevering and unscrupulous enmity kept him in a state of continued apprehension, so that he constantly wore armour under his clothes, and carried loaded pistols, one of which on one occasion went off in his pocket, and was more nearly proving fatal to him than the dagger of the assassin. In one instance the royalist party broke out into open insurrection ; a gentleman of the name of Penrud-

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dock entering Salisbury with 200 cavalry, and proclaiming Charles II. as king. But this premature rising was easily put down, and Cromwell determined, as far as possible, to crush the whole body of royalists; and, in spite of the act of indemnity which had been passed a year or two before, he, by his own authority, imposed a heavy yearly tax on the estates of all who had ever sided with the late king, and appointed a number of his military officers to collect it, whose rapacity and oppression made even that iniquitous exaction more intolerable still. He also erected a high court of justice, as arbitrary as the Star Chamber, and even more formidable in some respects, inasmuch as it inflicted the punishment of death, so that the trial by jury was practically abolished in the most important causes; and even in civil suits he at times interfered, commanding plaintiffs to desist from actions which they had commenced, or intimidating the judges so that they did not dare to give decisions contrary to his expressed wishes or opinions.

But though he thus openly trampled law and justice under foot, he felt it necessary to make a show of ruling according to some prescribed constitutional forms, and, with this view, he drew up what he called an instrument of government, regulating the arrangement of the executive power, which was to be vested wholly in himself, and of the legislative power, which was to be shared between him and one chamber of members of parliament elected by the people; and providing also for the maintenance of a standing army of 30,000 men. He likewise new-modelled the representation of the three kingdoms, which he had already united by a public ordinance; and which were enjoined to send their representatives to one common parliament. Four hundred members were allotted to England and Wales, thirty to Ireland, the same number to Scotland, and the right of returning them was taken from many towns which had latterly fallen into decay, and given to others which had recently risen to importance; so that, in some respects, the principles of the reform bill of our own time were anticipated in a way that many, even of the royalists, approved.

Cromwell here displayed important legislative talents; but, in his treatment of the parliament itself, he showed neither wisdom nor magnanimity: the members were allowed neither freedom of speech, nor a choice of the subjects for their debate; the form of government was not even to be discussed; and when, in spite of the restrictions with which he had fettered them, their language, and the pretensions which they advanced, appeared too bold, he addressed a long harangue to them, in which he told them explicitly that they were only a free parliament as long as they submitted to his authority, which, as conferred upon him by both God and man, was equivalent to any hereditary title; and required

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them to sign a paper pledging themselves never to meddle with what he called the foundations of the established government. Above 150 members refused to sign it, and were turned out; but those who remained were not obsequious enough to satisfy his arbitrary will; they even reduced some of the estimates for the public service which he caused to be presented to them, and at last proceeded to resolve that a bill for the settlement of the government of the Commonwealth, which they were discussing, needed not the consent of the Protector to make it a law. He was not slow to take up the gauntlet thus thrown down to him; at the end of January, 1655, he dissolved them; and for more than two years governed without a parliament; thus imitating the conduct of the late king in its most unconstitutional part.

In another point he even showed an inclination to the worst portions of his predecessor's policy. He professed indeed to adopt the principles of religious toleration; but, in practice, no one was ever less inclined to them. A Roman Catholic priest was hanged, the episcopal clergy were deprived of their livings, laymen of the same persuasion were forbidden to receive them as chaplains or tutors to their children, and numbers of learned and pious men were reduced to indigence by the severity with which these arbitrary edicts were executed. It was only the sectaries who renounced episcopacy who met with indulgence, and, what they greatly needed, protection from the fury of each other. The leaders of these different sects were often admitted to private conferences in which they were allowed to lecture him at what length they pleased; and they were greatly edified by his God-fearing language, his docile humility, his devout tears. They would have been less pleased had they seen him rub his hands after their departure, and say to his cousin Waller, the poet, who was witness to many such meetings, "Come, cousin, we must talk to these folks in their own jargon; but now we may converse as we please."

In one respect only did he put himself in open opposition to the fanatical party to whom he so much trusted as the firmest allies of his government. There was no greater object of their animosity than the two universities: they detested their system of education; they cast a covetous eye upon their riches, and in the Barebone parliament their entire abolition, and the confiscation and sale of their estates, had been urged to a willing audience. But Cromwell had accepted the office of chancellor of Oxford, and in his youth had passed some time at Cambridge, and he was thus in some degree attached to both; and not only preserved those ancient seats of piety and learning, but even meditated the foundation of another at Durham, to facilitate to the inhabitants of the northern counties the acquisition of advantages equal to those enjoyed by their more

fortunate brethren of the south : in this instance again anticipating the events of our own generation.

Commerce also was an object of his eager solicitude. He established a council with the especial charge of providing for the extension of that great source of national wealth, and for the encouragement of navigation, our pre-eminence in which is the surest foundation of the national safety. He renewed the charter of the East India Company, increased its privileges, and applied himself to the amelioration of many institutions, and the reform of many abuses, hoping by this display of a desire to consult the happiness and the rights of the people in general to efface the impression which his tyranny towards individuals had inevitably created, while in Ireland and Scotland his second son, Henry Cromwell, and Monk, a brave and skilful soldier, preserved tranquillity by a judicious mixture of firmness and indulgence. His foreign policy was of a more uniform and of a more successful character. He made peace with the Dutch, who were greatly dispirited by the event of an action which took place shortly before he became Protector, and in which Monk commanded the English fleet. The number of ships which they lost was small ; but Van Tromp himself was killed, and his loss left them without any admiral equal to cope with the daring of the British sailors. With other foreign nations he found it easy to increase his alliances ; they saw the energy of his government, and were ignorant of the extent to which his arbitrary measures had created disaffection. One of the last acts of Christina, queen of Sweden, the eccentric daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, was to sign a treaty with Whitelocke, whom he had sent on a special embassy to her court ; and by other treaties with Denmark and Portugal he secured important commercial advantages for the nation. Yet his desire for foreign connexions never led him to submit to the very smallest injury or slight, of which he gave a remarkable instance shortly after the signing of the Portuguese treaty. Don Pantaleon Sa, brother to the Portuguese ambassador, fancying that he had been insulted in a dispute with a gentleman at the Exchange, returned the next day to the same spot with a long train of armed servants, and either out of mistake, or out of wantonness, killed a gentleman who had borne no part in the quarrel of the preceding day. Cromwell immediately sent officers to seize him ; though he had taken refuge in the house of his brother, the Spanish ambassador, and in spite of his invoking the law of nations, which, as he maintained, held the whole train of an ambassador inviolable, he had him brought to trial, and beheaded on Tower Hill, for the murder.

At one time he entertained the design of uniting all the Protestant

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states of Europe in one common interest, and of establishing a council composed of deputies from each to meet at fixed intervals; and, though this project came to nothing, he took every opportunity of putting himself forward as the champion of the Protestant interest; compelling the duke of Savoy to desist from a persecution which he meditated against the Vaudois, and by his active interposition obtaining from Louis XIV. pardon for the Huguenots, who had rendered themselves justly liable to severe punishment by exciting formidable riots at Nismes; indeed, his interest at the French court gradually rose to such a height, that, though they did not withdraw the pension assigned to Charles II., they treated him with so much indifference, that he withdrew from their territories, and settled at Cologne, from which city he subsequently removed to Bruges, which continued his chief residence till his restoration.

Yet with this domestic and foreign security and power, Cromwell was not content. He was still eager for aggrandizement at home; he could not be satisfied without the title as well as the authority of a king; and he thought military glory and conquest the readiest means of gaining the acquiescence of the people, or, in other words, of the army. Accordingly he determined on war, and in the winter of 1654 he began to prepare a large force both of ships and soldiers, the destination of which was kept a profound secret. He himself went down to Portsmouth to superintend the operations; and on one occasion was followed down the street by a crowd of sailors' wives, vociferously inquiring to what country he was about to send their husbands. "The ambassadors of France and Spain," he replied, "would give me a million to answer your question." He had not, however, found it difficult to decide on the enemy to be attacked; it was not easy to keep up a close connexion with both France and Spain, and there were many reasons why a war with the latter power would be the more popular. Spain was a country far more exclusively Roman Catholic than France, where, as yet, the Protestants enjoyed a considerable degree of indulgence legally secured to them; secondly, Spain was far weaker in Europe than France; and lastly, her extensive colonies in America and the West Indies rendered her far richer, and also far more vulnerable. Spain, therefore, was the object of the destined attack, which Cromwell determined to make, not only without issuing any declaration of war, but with such deceit and treachery, that, when he sent Blake to the Mediterranean with his fleet intended to act against the coasts of Spain itself, he wrote a letter with his own hand to the king, Philip IV., informing him that the sole object of the expedition was to protect the British trade in the Mediterranean, and that the admiral was charged to

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avoid doing the least injury to the friends and allies of the commonwealth, and especially to the Spaniards: This letter had scarcely reached Madrid when Penn and Venables sailed, with orders to attack St. Domingo, one of the most important of the Spanish islands. Penn was the admiral, Venables the general of the expedition. Though both were brave men, neither was very skilful; they were jealous of each other, and the misunderstandings which arose between them caused the total failure of the attack. They were repulsed with considerable loss; but so uniform was the good fortune of Cromwell, that from this disaster he reaped a greater benefit than he could have expected from the success of his original design. Unwilling to return home without making an effort to retrieve their reputation, the two commanders decided on attacking Jamaica: it surrendered almost without resistance, and that rich and fertile island has ever since remained an important possession of the British crown.

Meanwhile Blake had been active in the Mediterranean; and after compelling some of the Italian princes to make satisfaction for having allowed Rupert to sell in their harbours English merchantmen, of which he had made prize, though failing, at the same time, to extort toleration for the English Protestants settled in their countries, he turned his attention to the more honourable task of chastising the corsairs of the African coast. He bombarded Tunis, and burnt the fleet lying in that port: the Deys of Tripoli and Algiers submitted without resistance to his demands, and he had the honour and happiness of restoring liberty to numbers of fellow-Christians and fellow-countrymen, who had believed themselves doomed for life to all the horrors of barbarian slavery.

Hitherto he had abstained from hostilities against Spain; and the first exertion of his power towards that kingdom ought hardly to be called so. Some of his sailors, being on shore at Malaga, had insulted the host on its passage through the streets; a tumult ensued, in which one of the priests, who took part in the procession, excited the populace to inflict summary punishment on the insulters of their religion. The sailors, severely beaten, escaped to their ships with difficulty, and complained to their admiral of the treatment which they had received. He demanded the surrender of the priest. It was to no purpose that the governor of the town represented that he was unable to comply; that in Spain a priest was exempt from all jurisdiction of any civil power. Blake replied, that if he were not surrendered in three hours, he would burn the town. The priest came on board; after hearing his statement, Blake pronounced his own sailors wholly in the wrong, and dismissed him in honour; telling him, that if he had addressed a complaint to him of their conduct, he would have punished them

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severely, but that he would make all the world know that an Englishman was only to be tried and punished by an Englishman. However monstrous this pretension was, its assertion was so conformable with Cromwell's ideas, that he read to his council with great exultation the despatch in which Blake related the occurrence, telling them that that was the spirit in which to treat foreigners, and that he would make the name of Briton as formidable as that of Roman had ever been.

As soon as the news of the attack on St. Domingo and the capture of Jamaica reached Spain, Philip declared war against England; and, to render it more effectual, made a treaty with Charles, promising to aid in his restoration with 6000 men, provided that Charles was able also to raise a force among his natural subjects, and to detach the Irish who were serving in the armies of France (then at war with Spain) from the service of that country. Blake, being on the spot, at once proceeded to blockade Cadiz, where the galleons from Peru were expected. One of his detached squadrons burnt two, and took two more, loaded with immense treasures, while he himself attacked a much larger fleet which lay in the harbour of Santa Cruz; and, though the port was fortified in a most formidable manner, he forced his way in, and destroyed every ship. It was his last exploit; his health had been long failing, and, though he was eager to return and die at home, he expired before he could reach land, leaving behind him a high character for honesty, bravery, and humanity, and for naval skill which at that time had never been surpassed.

The Spanish war, like all other wars, could only be maintained at a great cost; and Cromwell, in spite of his love of absolute power when exercised by himself, perceived plainly that it was unpopular in the kingdom, and that the levying of taxes by his own single authority was producing great discontent. This discontent he proposed to remove by calling a new parliament; but first he sought to lay the blame of it on others, and issued a proclamation, commanding a general fast, in which the whole nation should pray to God to show them the Achan, who had provoked Him in his displeasure to suffer disorder to reign in the land. Some of his subjects thought that the cause of the evils complained of might be ascertained without the aid of revelation; and sir Harry Vane, from his retirement in Lincolnshire, published a pamphlet, which traced them to the substitution of the authority of one man for the republic, in the hope of which he had borne his part in the resistance to the king, and proposed a return to that form of government as the best, if not the only remedy. It was notorious that a large party, including such men as Bradshaw, the president of the court that condemned

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Charles, shared the same opinions, and Cromwell summoned him and Vane before the council. Bradshaw was spared, but Vane was committed to prison, as were many of the old royalist party; and when Cromwell thought that by this severity he had deterred others from opposition, he issued writs for the new parliament. He took great pains to secure the return of members favourable to his interests, not only by corruption of every sort, but even by imprisoning some of those who were likely to prove too successful as candidates. On the other side the more violent sectaries and republicans sought by formidable riots to procure the triumph of their partisans, and were so far successful as to procure the return of full a hundred members, resolved to check every attempt of the Protector to strengthen or extend his power. The parliament met on the 17th of September, 1656. Cromwell opened it with an angry and threatening speech, concluding, however, with a paraphrase of the eighty-fifth Psalm, in which David expresses his exultation at the renewed favour of the Lord, who had turned again the captivity of Jacob; but this address was delivered not in the apartment where the members met, but in the painted chamber; and, on the members quitting it to take their seats in their usual place of debate, they found guards posted at the door, who prevented every one from entering whose election had been distasteful to the Protector. Above a hundred representatives of the people were thus excluded; and Cromwell flattered himself that he had thus escaped all danger of opposition to his designs. He was greatly mistaken. Even those members who had been allowed to enter, felt that the dignity of their position would be greatly lessened if they owed their seats not to the election of their countrymen, but to the permission of a single individual; and they determined to enquire of the council why their brethren had been excluded. Fiennes, the keeper of the great seal, had the boldness to reply that, as the article of the instrument of government which regulated elections enjoined the electors to choose none but men of integrity, good conduct, and such as feared God, it of necessity belonged to the council to decide whether those whom they elected deserved such a description, and they had decided that those whom the guards had been ordered to exclude did not deserve it. The audacious arrogance of this avowal only increased the universal discontent; but, fortunately for Cromwell, the news of Blake's last successes arrived just at this moment, and reconciled people to a government, the domestic tyranny of which would have appeared insupportable, if had not been for its foreign triumphs.

Forgetting its wrongs in its exultation, the parliament voted supplies for the war, passed one bill to exclude Charles II. and all his descendants from the throne, and another to ensure the safety

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of the Protector. Encouraged by these demonstrations of good will (though the royalist party thought his difficulties so great, that more than one of them openly proposed to him to undertake the restoration of Charles), he proceeded more boldly in his design to obtain the title of king; and one of his tools, named Jephson, made a formal motion to confer it upon him. A second motion to the same effect was made by Christopher Pack, one of the city members; and it was decided that the house should present an address to him, entreating him to assume that title. A committee of officers approached him with a similar petition. Cromwell professed to feel scruples about complying with their request, and a committee was appointed to discuss the matter with him, he hoping, no doubt, that the reasons which the conductors of the argument would advance might overcome the unwillingness of others to see him assume that dignity. In the mean time his agents were diligent in ascertaining the feelings of the army, whom, even for an object so near his heart, he could not venture to offend. Those feelings were easily ascertained. General Fleetwood, who had married his daughter, and Pride, who had been his agent in expelling the relics of the long parliament, declared openly against his calling himself a king. Some said that the army would mutiny, others that he would be assassinated. At last he most unwillingly abandoned the idea, and gave a distinct refusal to the parliamentary commissioners.

An extension of his authority as Protector did not seem open to the same objections; and bills were passed assigning him a large revenue for life, giving him the right of naming his successor, and authorizing him also to nominate members to sit in a separate chamber as a house of lords. As this was the first legal establishment of the protectorate, for hitherto his discharge of that office had not been sanctioned by parliament, and was a manifest usurpation, he was again inaugurated with great pomp in Westminster Hall, and every member of either house of parliament was compelled to take an oath of allegiance to him; so that his person was thus invested with the same sacred inviolability as that of a crowned king. The creation, however, of his new peers was only to be for life, and of those to whom the honour was proffered a great number refused it. In spite of his general success in other matters, their refusal gave him great uneasiness, as betokening a doubt of the continuance of his power; and this uneasiness grew into personal apprehension, on the appearance of a pamphlet, entitled "Killing no Murder," the work probably of a person of the name of Sexby, who had been concerned in more than one plot against his government, and one which spoke openly of his death as the only means for the deliverance of the country.

In his domestic affairs he was fortunate, marrying his daughters, who were still single, to two of the wealthiest and most ancient of the nobility, lord Falconbridge, and Rich, the grandson and heir of the earl of Warwick ; but his political anxieties gradually increased. When the parliament met again, he was far weaker than before ; for, though the attendance in the new house of lords was but scanty, yet as those who did consent to accept seats there were chiefly men who had been his staunch supporters in the commons, their absence from the lower house was severely felt ; and some of the motions brought forward were so unpalatable to him, that at the beginning of 1658 he dissolved the parliament, throwing all the blame on their own impracticable conduct, and calling on God to judge between him and them.

His rejection, however, of the kingly title had confirmed the greater part of the army in its fidelity to him, though some of the more violent fanatics still occupied themselves in plotting against him ; and he sought to increase the confidence of his friends by laying before them the motives of the late dissolution, and seeming to court their sanction to, and approval of, the measure. In so doing he greatly exaggerated the dangers which threatened the public tranquillity. It was true that the royalists were busier than ever with their intrigues. The marquis of Ormond had even come over to London in disguise to investigate the chances of a successful rising ; but it was also true that all their movements were betrayed to Cromwell by sir Richard Willis, one of Charles's most confidential advisers, and that he was thus enabled securely to defeat their projects ; in fact, he did arrest all those whose conspiracies appeared to him of any real importance, and revived the high court of justice for the purpose of securing their condemnation, which he was unwilling to trust to an unpacked jury. Several were executed, among them sir Henry Slingsby, the uncle of his son-in-law, lord Falconbridge, who made great, but fruitless exertions to save him ; yet, in spite of these precautions, and this sanguinary vengeance, Cromwell was more anxious and fearful than ever. He never went out alone, or without a guard ; never returned home by the same road as that by which he had gone out ; never slept two following nights in the same room, and had secret passages of escape made from most of his bedrooms ; so timid had conscience made the most intrepid of men.

A ray of military success was reserved to comfort his latter days. In accordance with a treaty made with France the preceding year, he had sent 6000 men to serve under the orders of Turenne against the Spaniards. The prince of Condé, though a Frenchman, and the duke of York, afterwards James II., were in the Spanish army ; but the Spanish general was jealous of Condé's military

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renown, and, in spite of his remonstrances, decided on fighting a battle for the relief of Dunkirk, which Turenne was besieging closely, rather against his own judgment, in order to gratify Cromwell. In the battle which took place, the English troops displayed the most distinguished gallantry. Turenne's victory was complete; and when Dunkirk fell, it was delivered up to Cromwell, according to agreement.

He was beginning to think of summoning a fresh parliament, and with that view was seeking to conciliate some whose opposition he had most reason to dread, when he sustained a severe blow in his own family by the death of his favourite daughter, Mrs. Claypole, who on her deathbed lamented the crimes into which, in her judgment, he had been led. His son-in-law Rich had died a short time before, and these sorrows, joined to the continual anxieties which agitated him, threw him into a fever, which soon assumed a character that alarmed the physicians, though some of the preachers who had access to him, assured him that the Lord had revealed to them the certainty of his recovery. The physicians proved the more accurate judges. The 3rd of September, the anniversary of the victories of Dunbar and Worcester, he had always accounted a day of especial good fortune to him; in the afternoon of that day he died, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and not quite ten years after he had practically secured to himself the supreme power by the death of the king.

Cromwell was descended from a gentleman's family in the county of Huntingdon; and in early youth had led a dissipated life, which, however, he soon abandoned for practices more agreeable to religion, though his devotion, as it is very usual with such sudden converts, assumed the character of fanaticism and superstition. As a member of parliament he did not at first take a leading part in the debates, for he was not gifted with eloquence, though the obscurity of many of his harangues probably proceeded as much from design as from any deficiency in the power of expressing himself clearly. Still, he gave such indications of ability and resolution, that Hampden, who was his kinsman, prophesied his future eminence if ever civil war should break out in the kingdom. When it did break out his ambition speedily obtained the predominance over his religious feelings, and, though we cannot pronounce how soon he began to entertain the idea of killing the king and reigning in his place, it is clear that Charles's death was wholly his work, and that his object in it was to secure his own succession to the kingly power, if not to the kingly dignity. To this end all his military talents, which were considerable, and all his statesman-like ability, which was of a far higher order, were steadily directed: nor were any scruples of religion, or of humanity, or of good faith, ever permitted to interfere with its attainment.

As a ruler, we must recollect in the first place, that, till the last year of his life, his power was an undisguised usurpation. His original assumption of the protectorate was a compliance with the petition of a few persons, not authorized to express any opinion but their own ; it rested simply on force, that is, on the support of the army ; and the sanction latterly given to it by the parliament was a mere farce ; for a body so elected, and so winnowed of all members obnoxious to him, had no right whatever to be considered as speaking the sense of the nation. Nor did the manner in which he exercised his power at home make any atonement for the means by which he acquired it. It is true that his project of a legislative union between the three kingdoms was a wise design, and the alterations which he made in the representation were for the most part well-imagined and beneficial reforms ; but, in other respects, his government was an unmitigated and merciless tyranny. For a long time, in proportion to the brief duration of his sway, he governed without a parliament, raising taxes by his own authority, and imposing heavy penalties on a larger class of his subjects in the same illegal manner. By his high court of justice he put to death a great number of persons whom he studiously deprived of a fair trial ; and he even sold free-born Englishmen for slaves, an atrocity unexampled in any other country in Europe. If the sack of Magdeburgh has been deemed sufficient to cover the names of Tilly and Pappenheim with infamy, it is hard to see how the perpetrator of the massacres of Drogheda and Wexford, can deserve to be regarded with slighter feelings of detestation.

It is his foreign policy which gained him the respect of his contemporaries, and which has given his name its renown in the eyes of posterity. It was not always moderate or equitable, for there can be no doubt that the war with Spain was one of unprovoked aggression, while it was, moreover, stained with the most deliberate and unprovoked treachery ; but in general it was energetic, spirited, and dictated by a correct perception of the interests of the country. It must indeed be borne in mind that he was singularly favoured by the state in which every other nation of importance at this time found itself. Spain had never recovered from the exhaustion produced by her long and unsuccessful struggle with her revolted subjects in the Netherlands : and the defeats which she had recently sustained at Rocroi and Lens, were at once the evidence and the consummation of her degradation. An infant king, a foreign minister, a rebellion which more than once drove both from the capital, accompanied by such an universal demoralisation that the chief princes of the blood royal thought it no shame to appear in arms against their sovereign, rendered France, though the conqueror in these two battles, in reality scarcely more formidable than Spain,

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while the Empire was still more disabled by a war which had been protracted to the unprecedented duration of thirty years, and which was only closed a few months before the death of Charles left Cromwell the ostensible master of this nation. At such a time, therefore, it was a work of but little difficulty to make the voice of England heard with effect on the Continent, and the credit to which Cromwell is entitled must be limited to that of having made skilful use of the opportunity thus afforded him, of raising her upon the weakness of her neighbours. To that praise, however, he is fully entitled; never, not even in the time of Elizabeth, had the reputation of England stood so high upon the Continent as during the few years that the sceptre, or the sword occupying the place of the sceptre, was in Cromwell's hands; nor had the most legitimate monarch been so universally courted, or found his wishes so deferentially attended to. Perhaps he owes some of his reputation with posterity to the contrast forced upon us between him and the worthless prince who succeeded him; but the fact remains, that during his lifetime, when there was no opportunity of making such a comparison, England, which for half a century had lost her weight on the Continent, did under his administration not only resume her former position, but greatly strengthen it. This is, of itself, great praise for the ruler of a nation. We may add that, under his rule, the power of England abroad was, for the most part, beneficially exerted; it was employed to protect the Protestants of France, to save the primitive worshippers of the Piedmontese valleys, to chastise the infidel pirates of the African coast, and to restore Christian captives to unlooked-for liberty.

If we except his religious hypocrisy, which seems to have been indispensable to the successful management of his chief supporters, there was nothing mean or petty in his character. His very crimes bore a stamp of greatness on them. We may not cease to visit with the most unshrinking condemnation the duplicity of his conduct while seeking the supreme power, his murder of his sovereign, his inhuman massacres in Ireland, his fierce tyranny when possessed of power; but, on the other hand, his dauntless courage, his military skill, superior to that of all his countrymen except Fairfax and Montrose, his insight into the character of his fellow-men, his genius for moulding them to his own wishes, his vigorous assertion of the dignity of his own country among foreign nations, his success in increasing her prosperity and reputation, must always, and deservedly, secure him a very high place among the ablest rulers of nations.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE COMMONWEALTH (CONTINUED).

A. D.
1658.
1659.



ROMWELL had not appointed a successor by any formal instrument, but those who surrounded his dying bed announced that he had declared his eldest son, Richard, his heir; who now succeeded to his authority with the general consent, and was immediately recognized by foreign powers. The French court was especially forward in acknowledging him; Louis put on mourning for Oliver as for a legitimate king, and Mazarin made his secretary Thurloe the most profuse offers of assistance. For a short time the hopes to which the death of their powerful master had given birth in the breasts of the royalists and other malcontents seemed likely to be disappointed, but they soon began to revive, as the dissatisfaction of the army with the new government became apparent.

Richard had hitherto lived as a quiet country gentleman, concerning himself but little in politics, still less in military affairs; and it was soon seen that he had no talent for either. Those of his advisers who had any statesman-like ability were not displeased at his want of it, feeling competent and being not unwilling to govern the country in his name; but the chief officers, who considered that Oliver had owed the attainment and also the preservation of his power solely to the army, were indignant at seeing him succeeded by one who had no such claim to the respect or attachment of the soldiers, and began at once to cabal against him. The chiefs of the English army were Fleetwood, Desborough, and Lambert. Fleetwood was Cromwell's son-in-law, Desborough his brother-in-law; but Lambert was the most skilful soldier. Fleetwood was a weak, vain man, with no settled views; Desborough a sullen republican, eager chiefly for gain, and so unwilling to acknowledge any supreme power, that he had not always been submissive to the ascendancy even of Oliver himself. He was far less likely to be a quiet subject of Richard, whom he despised. Lambert was actuated by views of personal ambition, hoping ultimately to raise himself to the station occupied by Oliver, and not discerning that military skill, the only point in which he resembled him, was the lowest of the qualities by which Cromwell had acquired or maintained his authority.

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There was one other general, of superior abilities and influence to any of the three, but he was at a distance from London, the immediate scene of action. It was seen afterwards that his absence, both as keeping him aloof from the intrigues which were going on, and as preventing his troops from being influenced by the divisions of the rest of the army, greatly increased that influence. Monk had been for some time governor of Scotland, which he had kept in order with a firm hand, and without finding it necessary to have recourse to any unpopular measures of severity. He was an able warrior, having distinguished himself greatly at Dunbar, and also as commander of the fleet in the action in which Van Tromp was killed; and his army, though not very numerous, had great confidence in him. He had also considerable political talents, not, indeed, of the highest order, but such as are eminently useful in revolutionary times; he was not far-sighted, but wary; not enterprising, but possessed of immovable coolness and presence of mind; not disinterested, but willing to make his own interests harmonize with those of the nation; possessed of such impenetrable reserve, that not even to his own brother would he reveal his plans or his wishes. In dissimulation surpassing even Cromwell himself, he was a pilot eminently fitted, if not to direct the storm, at least to guide his bark in safety through it to the haven which he desired to reach; for he had originally been an adherent of Charles, had served in his army, till he was taken prisoner by Fairfax at Nantwich, and it was only through distress that he was induced to accept the offers of Cromwell, who thought highly of his military skill, and to take the command of a division of the army sent to reduce the Irish to subjection.

On Richard's accession, he wrote him a letter, full of judicious advice on the management of the army, recommending him, among other things, to dismiss all the officers whom he considered of doubtful fidelity; and though Richard had not decision enough to follow this counsel, it was soon seen how desirable it would have been for him to have done so; for in the middle of October they presented an address to him, in which they begged him to appoint a soldier their commander-in-chief, a measure which, in fact, would have placed him at the mercy of the army. He refused their demand; and they retired in silence, determined to renew it at a favourable opportunity.

He now summoned a parliament, issuing writs, not in accordance with the reformed system established by his father, but to the places which had returned members in the time of the monarchy. But the parliament proved hardly more manageable than the army. The republican members were especially violent, declaiming openly against submission to the authority of any single individual; and,

though they were unable to prevent the passing of a resolution acknowledging Richard as protector, they succeeded in carrying clauses greatly limiting his power, and not indistinctly threatening its permanence. A subsequent debate on the question, whether the commons should acknowledge the authority of the house of lords, such as Oliver had made it, was still more ominous of the future. Many of the members spoke openly in praise of the old house of peers as it subsisted before the civil war; many asserted its rights to be not dead, but dormant, and advised that they should be again convoked. Nearly all opposed the recognition of the motley assembly which Oliver had substituted for them; and few were deterred by the argument advanced by some of the officers, and some of the leading lawyers, that a restoration of the old peers could stand on no ground different from the restoration of Charles Stuart, and would be sure to lead to it.

In the spring of the next year Fleetwood and Desborough, by artful representations of the discontent of the army, induced Richard to convoke a council of officers to pacify them. His personal friends at once pointed out to him the peril in which his consent to this measure placed him, and in fact the council began without delay to show their intention to control both him and the parliament. At the end of a month he dissolved it, but the members refused compliance with his order for their dissolution, and continued to meet, and to plot more and more openly against his authority. In his perplexity Richard applied to Monk for support, offering to settle 20,000*l.* a year on him, if he would hasten to his aid; but Monk declined to involve himself in what he clearly perceived to be a falling cause, and Richard felt himself helpless. The officers summoned the army to meet them at St. James's. Richard issued a proclamation commanding them to meet him at Whitehall. It was universally disregarded, while the summons of the officers was obeyed. As soon as it was clear which part the soldiers had chosen, Desborough went to Richard to require him to dissolve the parliament. He did not dare to refuse. It was dissolved; and, soon afterwards, without consulting him, the council of officers summoned the remnant of the long parliament, the Rump as it had been called, which Oliver had expelled six years before, to resume their places at Westminster as the council of the nation.

Those who had hitherto been Richard's chief advisers no longer interfered to resist the course of events, which they were unable to arrest, and Richard was virtually deposed. The parliament, now again wholly subservient to the army, sent him orders to leave Whitehall. So determined did he for a moment seem to be to resist, that some of the royalists actually urged him to declare for the king, and to go down to the fleet, embark, and hoist

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the royal standard ; and he agreed to do so, provided they would assure him an estate of 20,000*l.* a year. But when the moment for the execution of these plans arrived he wavered, probably because he received letters from Mazarin, offering him both soldiers and money. The time for successful action of that kind passed by. In July he was forced to resign his power, and to content himself with an annuity of 10,000*l.* a year for his life, and an estate of 5000*l.* a year for his heirs, and he retired to pass the rest of his days in obscurity and tranquillity.

The royalists were greatly encouraged. Charles's affairs were managed abroad by Hyde with consummate prudence and dignity. The divisions among his enemies in England, and the general feelings of indignation at the insolence of the army were daily increasing ; and Hyde's friends at home had some grounds for their assertions when they wrote him word, that of all the parties in the island the king's was decidedly the strongest. In fact it was so strong as not to be greatly discouraged nor greatly weakened by the betrayal by Willis, whose treachery was not yet discovered by Hyde, of the plan of a general insurrection in the western counties, and by its consequent failure in Cheshire, the only county in which the leaders proceeded to action, and where sir George Booth, after seizing Chester, was defeated and made prisoner by Lambert. The crafty Mazarin began to see that the commonwealth was not likely to preserve its existence much longer ; and though he himself would not as yet open any communication with the exiled princes, Turenne, his most trusted commander, made a tender of a large body of his troops to Charles, with artillery, ships, money, and provisions ; while Condé, the most formidable leader of the French rebel party, made him offers of a nearly similar character.

The parliament began to be uneasy at the inferior position which they occupied, and sought to change it without considering whether they were able to do so. The officers, on the other hand, were desirous to secure the establishment of their power on a durable basis, and required the parliament to invest Fleetwood, Desborough, and Lambert with permanent commands, to whom they added Monk, in hopes to secure his alliance by making his interest identical with theirs. The parliament rejected their demand, and, relying on the republican feeling of some of the regiments, called those regiments to their aid, and prepared to encounter force by force. They found their mistake. The troops on whom they most relied went over to Lambert, who then turned them out with as little ceremony as Cromwell had used six years before, and established a new council which assumed the name of the Committee of Safety, to carry on the affairs of the commonwealth.

These events made the king's adherents more sanguine than ever.

They saw that the violence of the army was likely to terrify all moderate men into wishing to be relieved from it, and Charles himself now ventured to write a letter to Monk, to invite him openly to espouse his cause. In Monk's opinion, however, the time for an open display of his intentions had not yet arrived. It was a favourite saying of his, that the man who kept too closely by the heels of truth was in danger of having his brains kicked out, and the nearer the crisis came, the more close was his reserve. Still, the forcible expulsion of the parliament was such a plain violation of every principle of government, that he did not hesitate to declare his disapproval of it, and wrote to Lenthall, the speaker, to assure him of his support; and to Lambert to request, in a somewhat imperious tone, that the parliament might be replaced in its former position, and to announce his intention of upholding it. Lambert laid the letter before the Committee of Safety, and proposed to march at once at the head of an army to attack Monk. The committee accepted his offer, but sent Monk's brother-in-law, Clarges, and Talbot, the colonel of his regiment, with him, to endeavour to effect a reconciliation, if possible, without coming to an open rupture. Clarges and Talbot proceeded to Edinburgh, while Lambert with his troops waited at York. Monk, as was his habit, summoned his chief officers to a council, and, with their consent, despatched commissioners from his army to negotiate with the Committee of Safety. Valuable time was thus gained; and, before the end of November, he himself, at the head of his army, set out from Edinburgh on his march to England. He had proceeded but a very little way when he received notice that the envoys whom he had sent to England had been cajoled into agreeing to conditions wholly opposed to his views. His officers urged him at once to annul their agreement, as inconsistent with their instructions; but he preferred sending fresh commissioners, of greater firmness, to re-open the negotiations, and continued his march towards the south. The attitude which he now assumed gave the supporters of the parliament so much encouragement that the old council of state, which had been superseded by Lambert's Committee of Safety, ventured to reassemble, and sent Monk a formal appointment as captain-general of the army: it reached him at Berwick. About the same time Lawson, who commanded the fleet, also declared for the parliament; and Fleetwood, who was the chief officer left in London, fearing that the restoration of the king was almost inevitable, and that the only chance of escaping such an event lay in the reassembling of the parliament, sent word to Lenthall that "God had spit in the faces of the Committee of Safety," and invited him to reassemble the members, that they might resume their deliberations. They met on the 26th

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of December, and at once began to quarrel among themselves as vehemently as ever. But the news of their having met at all was very satisfactory to Monk, who, on the 1st of January, 1660, crossed the Tweed, and entered England. He had gained another ally of great importance. Fairfax, though suffering from a cruel disease, had still great influence in the army, declared for the parliament, and, being speedily joined by a number of troops, took possession of York. Lambert's army melted away of itself at the news of this event and of Monk's advance. Monk proceeded rapidly, still maintaining the most impenetrable reserve as to his ultimate intentions, so far as even to punish one officer who expressed an opinion that he was favourable to the return of the king. As he approached London petitions and deputations reached him, entreating him to declare for the summoning of a free parliament. He made no reply to such requests, nor did he take any decisive step till his arrival at St. Alban's, when, on the plea that the troops in London had before now rebelled against the parliament, he wrote to Lenthal to advise that they should be removed to a distance, and that the regiments which he had brought with him should be received in their quarters. The parliament adopted his counsels; some feeling that they had no choice, others hoping, by this display of confidence in him, to shame him into continuing his adherence to them; and, on the 3rd of February, Monk entered London at the head of his troops, and was now clearly the irresistible master of the city, of the parliament, and of the future fate of the nation. Still he concealed his sentiments for some days so completely that some of the royalists wrote to their friends abroad, that he was evidently a Republican at heart; and, though many of them trusted him so much that they returned from the Continent, and began to speak of their flourishing prospects, the parliament also was so assured of his protection as to venture on arresting several of them and to pass a strong resolution against all who should countenance any design in favour of Charles Stuart. They went further; a day or two afterwards the city declared against them, and the common council resolved to pay no more taxes till a free parliament met to oppose them; on which they sent Monk to destroy the barriers, gates, and portcullises, and to compel the city to obedience. He executed their orders, and, when the rupture between the city and the parliament was thus made irretrievable, he reconciled himself to the citizens by writing an authoritative letter to the parliament, requiring them to dissolve themselves by a certain day, and in the mean time to issue writs for the election of a free parliament.

It was many years since any event had diffused such universal joy; the bells were rung, bonfires were lighted, the mob in its exultation would have gone down to Westminster and turned out

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the parliament at once, if they had not been prevented by Monk. At the same time, so certain was every one that a free parliament would recall the king, that Charles's health was openly drunk in the streets. Yet still Monk hesitated to declare his intentions openly; as Vane said, "he had still several masks to pull off;" and some days after his letter to the parliament, which almost every one considered decisive of the king's restoration, he avowed himself prepared to live and die for a Commonwealth, and, on another occasion, protested that he would "to the utmost oppose the setting up of Charles Stuart, or a house of peers." He was so attached to dissimulation and falsehood, that he could not cease to dissemble and to feign even when nobody could be deceived.

At the previous sittings of this parliament, since the death of Oliver, they had constantly refused to permit the members whom he had ejected before the death of the king, and who were chiefly presbyterians, to take their seats. Prynne had struggled hard for his rights, and had been defeated; but now Monk compelled those who had objected to them to admit them, and thus fortified himself by the votes of a party, not indeed abstractedly favourable to the restoration of the king, but dreading that or any other imaginable event far less than the triumph of the Republicans. Again the parliament appointed Monk general-in-chief of the army; giving the command of the fleet to admiral Montague, who was well known as a staunch partisan of Charles. Yet, even now, the Republicans resolved to make one more struggle for victory; they still thought it possible to gain Monk over. He was believed to be very covetous; and to gratify this, always a darling vice where it exists at all, they moved the commons to present him with the palace at Hampton Court; hoping thus to engage him by his pecuniary interests for ever to oppose the restoration of the king; but his friends had the address to substitute for the gift of the palace a grant of 20,000*l.*; so that Monk was enriched and yet unentangled. So cautious was he, that even yet he felt hardly sure of the army, and proceeded to secure it by slow degrees; substituting for the officers whom he doubted most as Republicans others on whose obedience he could more surely rely, and, simultaneously with this line of conduct, he hastened as much as possible the dissolution of parliament. As a last resource, the Republicans offered him the protectorate for himself: he refused it, and three days afterwards, on the 16th of March, the last remnant of the long parliament dissolved itself, and issued writs for a new parliament.

In the days of the monarchy a statue of Charles I. had stood in a niche in front of the Royal Exchange, which, at the time of his execution, had been thrown down, a Latin inscription being substituted in his place, "*Exit tyrannus, regum ultimus.*"* The day

* The tyrant has departed, the last of the kings.

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before the dissolution of parliament, a man dressed as a painter, and accompanied by several soldiers, as if under the protection of the general, placed a ladder against the wall, and with a paint-brush effaced the disloyal inscription. As he descended from the ladder he threw up his cap, and cried, "God bless Charles the Second." The populace took up the shout; again the city blazed with bonfires, and it seemed that Charles might that day have resumed his throne with perfect safety.

The presbyterians began at once to treat with him; wishing, with a singular want of appreciation of circumstances, to impose the same conditions on him that had been offered to his father while a prisoner in the Isle of Wight. But Charles had now received promises of service from Monk himself, and was not dismayed by the intelligence that, in his conversation with the presbyterians, Monk declared himself favourable to the exaction of the terms proposed.

On the 25th of April the parliament met; and, even before they had time to pass any resolutions, the feeling in favour of Charles displayed itself throughout the city and over the whole country. Some of the regicides were made prisoners by the mob; the houses of Republicans were pillaged; Cromwell's widow hid her treasures in the house of a friend, and fled into Wales. The 1st of May was appointed by the commons for taking into consideration the state of the nation. On that day sir John Granville presented himself at the door of the house as the bearer of a letter from the king: he bore a similar letter to the lords; and then proceeded to deliver others to Monk, Montague, and the lord mayor. By lords and commons, by fleet, by army, and by the citizens they were received with acclamation. Both houses of parliament at once voted that, according to the fundamental laws of the kingdom, the government is, and ought to be, by king, lords, and commons. A large grant of money to the king and duke of York was voted unanimously; and a deputation from both houses was sent to Breda, where Charles was staying, to request his early return. The royal arms were again erected in public places, the royal statues were restored, the royal palaces were repaired and refurnished with incredible despatch, and the whole nation was animated with one feeling of eager expectation. On the 8th of May Charles was proclaimed with due formality in the city and at Westminster. On the 15th he arrived from Breda at the Hague, and received the parliamentary commissioners, and at the end of one week more, having first taken a graceful leave of the States General, and thanked them for the magnificent hospitality which he had received from them in his exile, he embarked on board Montague's flag-ship, and on the 25th of May he landed at Dover. From Dover to London his journey was

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one long triumphal procession. "Surely," said he, "I have been to blame in absenting myself so long from friends so eager to see me." The 29th was his birthday; he was thirty years of age. On that day, late in the evening, for his progress had been impeded by the crowds that blocked his way, he arrived at Whitehall, where the members of both houses of parliament awaited his coming. The speakers of each house presented him with a loyal address, to which he made brief, but gracious replies, and then, overcome with fatigue, with painful recollections, and with contending feelings, he offered up a thanksgiving to God for his restoration, and sought a welcome repose in that home, which, though his inheritance by birth, he had long despaired of revisiting, the time-honoured palace of the kings of England.

CHAPTER XLV.

CHARLES II.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperor.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Leopold.	Philip IV.		Alexander VII.	
	Charles II.	1665	Clement IX.	1667
<i>France.</i>			Clement X.	1676
Louis XIV.			Innocent IX.	1679

"**T**HE king shall enjoy his own again" had been for near twelve years the constant burden of the Cavaliers' song. It had even of late been echoed by some of the party who originally were most opposed to his father, when driven to compare their actual experience of the iron tyranny of Cromwell, or of the unbridled insolence of the army, with their anticipation of the slighter evils which they had apprehended from the arbitrary disposition of Charles I. At first their triumph at the realization of their prophecies was great; but, after a time, both royalists and presbyterians began to view the recent events with less complacency, and the general election was succeeded by as general a dissatisfaction. With the lower classes, indeed, Charles was popular to the end of his life, and his memory was long cherished by them with affection. They had not expected to gain any personal advantage from his restoration; they

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were not affected by the profligacy of his misgovernment, and they were more than their superiors accessible to the charm of his courteous affability and condescension. They were the higher ranks who felt aggrieved; and Charles was not so much to blame for their discontent as the unreasoning hopes which they themselves had cherished, and the inherent difficulties presented by so anomalous a state of affairs. The royalists had looked forward to a complete restoration of the estates of which they had been stripped, and to a monopoly of the royal favour for the future. The presbyterians thought that by co-operating in the restoration they also had entitled themselves to some share of the king's good will, and desired it to be shown in a toleration of their religious principles; but, though by virtue of a special act of parliament, the crown and the church resumed possession of the property which had been alienated from them, it was found impossible, without risking a general convulsion, to deprive the purchasers of the confiscated estates of individuals of the lands which they had bought. The legal difficulties of such a proceeding would have almost equalled the political difficulties, and those who obtained even a partial restitution were few in number.

On the other hand, although at first a scheme was proposed of modifying the episcopal authority and the discipline of the church, so as to satisfy the scruples of the presbyterians; although Baxter and Calamy were made chaplains to the king, a bishopric being offered to the former; and although a conference took place in the spring of 1661 between the leading divines of the church of England and of the Nonconformists, all these salutary designs were baffled by the violence of one party or the other, and in the end the church of England was restored with all its pristine authority, and an act of uniformity, as stringent as any passed in any former reign, was enacted by the new parliament, and the presbyterian clergy were nearly all expelled from their livings for non-compliance with it.

One of Charles's first acts was to reward some of his adherents, and to conciliate some of the more respectable of his former opponents by honours and preferments. Monk was made duke of Albemarle; admiral Montague, earl of Sandwich; and Hyde, to whom the great seal was delivered, earl of Clarendon. At the same time Hollis was created lord Hollis; Ashley Cooper, lord Ashley, and subsequently earl of Shaftesbury, by which title he is so much better known, that we shall always use it when speaking of him; while the earl of Manchester and lord Say received the appointments of lord chamberlain and lord privy seal.

The next important transaction was the punishment of those who had been concerned in the death of Charles I. Before the meeting

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of the parliament, which invited the king to return, Monk had advised him to proclaim a general amnesty; and though this was more than his advisers were willing to grant, Charles, in his declaration, promised pardon to all, "excepting only such persons as should be hereafter excepted by the parliament." That body instantly began to decide who should be deprived of the benefit of the royal clemency. A long debate took place on the 12th of May, while the king was still in Holland, and after a fierce struggle, the number of victims was reduced to ten: six of the king's judges: Cook, who had acted as attorney-general on his trial; Axtell and Hacker, who had commanded the guard at the trial and execution; and Peters, the fanatic preacher, who had urged the commission of the great crime from the pulpit. Vane and Lambert were also to be brought to trial, but their lives were to be spared. The trials were short, for the guilt of the prisoners was notorious; indeed, so far from denying it, many of them gloried in it, and went to their doom triumphing in being thought worthy to suffer for what they still maintained to be a righteous cause. Vane and Lambert were tried at a later period, when Lambert was sentenced to imprisonment in Guernsey; but Vane, in spite of the mercy intended by the parliament, was executed. The greatest criminals of all, Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton, had escaped the vengeance of their enemies by death. They were pronounced traitors by the parliament; but that was not sufficient. It was determined to inflict the punishment due to their treason on their remains; and on the anniversary of the death of Charles their dead bodies were dug up, hung to the three corners of the gallows erected at Tyburn, their heads were cut off, and fixed in front of Westminster Hall, and their bodies thrown into a pit at the ordinary place of execution. To the punishment of the living regicides no one could object; but it was beneath a king to war with the dead, and to inflict a childish and fruitless vengeance on ashes that could neither feel an injury nor learn a lesson.

In Scotland also an example was made of one or two of the principal supporters of the covenant, and enemies of the late king, especially of Argyll, though he was clearly protected by more than one act of indemnity passed in reference to that country; and episcopacy was established in that portion of the island as well as in England; Sharp, who had previously been a leader of the presbyterians, being won over by the archbishopric of St. Andrew's.

It remained to disband the army, a measure which all parties were inclined to approve, as all feared its insubordination, yet which many for a while hesitated to urge, lest they might hereafter stand in need of its aid; but Clarendon easily convinced the king of its desirableness, and the whole force was paid off, except about 5000

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guards, who would have shared the fate of their comrades, had it not been for an insurrection of the dangerous fanatics, called Fifth Monarchy-men, headed by one Venner, who raised a formidable riot in the streets of London, and were with difficulty prevented from doing serious injury by a regiment of guards which was marched against them.

The affairs of Ireland also required a speedy settlement. No more difficult matter came before the council; for in no portion of the kingdom had greater outrages upon justice and upon the rights of property been committed. Fortunately there was a quantity of land in the island that as yet had never been assigned to any proprietor; the authority of Ormond, who was made a duke, and reinstated in his office of lord-lieutenant, induced those who had been illegally enriched by the English parliament to relinquish a third of their possessions; and the portion thus ceded, added to that hitherto unappropriated, enabled the king in some degree to make amends to those who had suffered for their loyalty and for their religion.

Many of these measures were the work of the parliament, which met in May, 1661. The assembly, which recalled the king, not having been summoned by royal authority, is called by lawyers a convention, rather than a parliament; and, as soon as it had provided for the pressing emergencies of the moment, it was dissolved, and a more regular parliament was summoned, which gave a great preponderance to the royalist and church of England party; so that they were able also to pass two votes, which served no other purpose but that of marking their final triumph over the presbyterians: one ordering the covenant to be burnt by the common hangman; the other declaring that no possible illegality in the conduct of the king could justify forcible resistance to his authority; and to this last vote every member of a corporation in England was required to swear his assent. They soon carried their zeal further, enacting severe penalties against the Nonconformists. Tests were multiplied, and as each created a new set of offences, the gaols were filled with those whom the king in his original declaration had promised to protect, while even a single magistrate had power to sentence to transportation any one who after two convictions should persist in attending Divine worship in a meeting-house.

Not that this zeal for the Church implied the least regard for religion; which, with every other virtue except courage, seemed for a time banished from the country. Clarendon indeed, and Southampton, the two principal ministers, were virtuous men; but the king himself, from his wandering and uncertain career for many years while passing his life in a constant succession of hopes, disappointments, and intrigues, had contracted a dissolute recklessness

of character, which broke out in the most selfish shamelessness of debauchery; and the example of which had the most pernicious effect on the morals of the whole kingdom. The Puritans, though sincere for the most part in their religious feelings, had not only failed to make religion attractive, they had even rendered her ridiculous: their sacrilegious insults to the worship of others, their rigorous enforcement of minute and vexatious points of outward discipline, their furious condemnation of the most popular and innocent recreations, their high-crowned hats, lank hair, uplifted eyes, and nasal twang, had irritated some, and afforded food for the scoffing of others; while the Cavaliers, to mark the difference between themselves and these professors of exclusive piety, had plunged openly into the most outrageous dissoluteness, and had even affected a disregard of all moral and religious obligations, which many of them were at first far from feeling, though the habit of pretending to trifle with such subjects, ultimately produced among the generality of the party a real contempt for them.

It was natural to expect that the king would marry, and very desirable that he should do so speedily. His brother James had lately married the daughter of lord Clarendon, and had already one child. But Charles wished to have a son of his own to succeed him. Only the year before his restoration, he had offered to marry Hortense Mancini, the niece of cardinal Mazarin, but the cardinal had refused his proposal; and some of his friends had even countenanced the idea of his making Lambert's daughter his wife, in order to secure that general's aid towards his restoration: but now princesses from almost every country in Europe were offered to his acceptance; and, partly from his own inclinations, and partly in deference to the advice of Louis, who desired to secure an ally for Portugal, which had revolted from Spain, he chose Catharine of Braganza, a Portuguese princess, and received with her a vast sum of money as her dowry, with the fortress of Tangier, and the city of Bombay. At the same time, the alliance with France was cemented by the marriage of the princess Henrietta, who had been born at Exeter, when the queen fled thither from Oxford, to Louis's brother Philip, duke of Orleans. Catharine arrived in England in May, 1662, and for a day or two Charles professed himself highly delighted with her person, which was sufficiently pleasing, and with her manners, which were eminently agreeable; but he soon began to tire of a yoke to which he was not accustomed, to insult her by the introduction of his mistress as a lady of her bed-chamber, and then to treat her with coldness and neglect.

Charles was poor, and in debt; the expenses of his coronation, and of disbanding the army, had swallowed up the income of the first year of his reign; and, though the parliament perpetuated the

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excise, and invented a new tax of two shillings on each hearth in the kingdom, which they settled on him for life, the necessary expenditure could scarcely be kept down to a level with the revenue; and it was the opinion of the ablest financiers, that the people could bear no increase of taxation. The entire sum levied on the nation amounted to something less than 1,200,000*l.* a year; not one-fiftieth part of the sum contributed with ease in the present year by the same people; so enormously have the resources of the nation increased in little more than two centuries of free government. The population at the same time was about one-fourth of its present number; so that each individual contributed one-twelfth of the sum that is now required of his posterity. Yet we may safely say, that, in spite of the increased imposts to which he is subject, the taxpayer has greatly advanced in general prosperity, and every kind of comfort; while the progress made in education, and in refinement of manners and feelings, is equally striking with the increase of opulence and luxury.

Unfortunately, Charles was not inclined to practise the economy which his situation required. He was naturally thoughtless, his favourites were of more than usual rapacity, and though he himself was not of that generous temper that delights in volunteering presents to the objects of his affection, he had an indolent love of ease which made him shrink from the trouble of refusing a request, however unreasonable. Louis, who was rich, generous, and politic, was not displeased to see his cousin in a condition which prevented his being formidable abroad, and which made him dependent on others for the means of preserving his authority at home; he lent him a large sum of money, and offered to purchase Dunkirk, which, as has been already mentioned, he had ceded to Cromwell, when it was first taken from the Spaniards. The town was of no use for any English object; the cost of defending it was very great, and the purchase-money ample; yet no transaction of the reign gave deeper or more general offence: it was looked upon as a mean bartering away of the advantages won for the kingdom by Cromwell; and, as Clarendon was known to have advised it, the mob believed that his object was to enrich himself with a share of the price obtained for it, and gave the name of Dunkirk House to the mansion which he was building near Piccadilly, on the spot where the Clarendon Hotel still preserves the memory of his prudent and beneficial administration.

Clarendon had lost the good will of the people; he did not long preserve the favour of the king. He was not always faultless, but he was an honest and virtuous man, not well fitted for any court, and not at all for so profligate a society as that which now contaminated the royal palaces. He opposed all indulgences to the

Roman Catholics, whose religion Charles openly favoured, and, as is now well known, had already secretly espoused; he disdained to pay court to the worthless women who surrounded the king; he refused to pander to the covetousness or to humour the still more odious vices of the male favourites. They found it easy to set the king against one whose grave dignity was a reproach, and whose advice was a bore to him. They mimicked his stately carriage, and his still more solemn language, and were rapidly paving the way for his disgrace, when the parliament decided on war with Holland, and, for a time, domestic differences were forgotten in the preparation for a struggle with the only power that could dispute for a moment the empire of the sea with Great Britain. War was declared in February, 1665, and in June, the English fleet, under the duke of York, prince Rupert, and lord Sandwich, gave the Dutch fleet a decisive defeat. To the great surprise of Charles, France now made an alliance with Holland, but in a second engagement in 1666, which lasted four days, Rupert, with the duke of Albemarle for his colleague, beat off the united fleet of the enemy, which was greatly superior in numbers, and, a few weeks afterwards, again defeated them, followed them into the Scheldt, and burnt above 150 merchantmen. The next year Louis made peace with Charles, and negotiations with a similar object were commenced by England and Holland. In spite of the successful issue of the last naval campaign, peace was necessary for England, as the poverty of the exchequer (partly caused by the money voted for the purposes of the war being diverted from that object to feed the rapacity of the courtiers) prevented the fleet from being maintained in an efficient state, and it was at this moment lying inactive and not half manned in the different harbours. Unfortunately, De Witt, at that time the chief magistrate of the Dutch republic, was aware of its weakness, and, burning to revenge the insult inflicted on his own coasts in the preceding year, he refused an armistice while the negotiations were pending, and led the Dutch fleet in person into the Thames. The duke of York had already pointed out the necessity of fortifying the banks of the river, and some works had been begun, which were still unfinished for want of money, and were in no condition to offer any effectual resistance to the advance of the enemy. At the first alarm Monk hastened to the Medway, threw a boom across that river, and sank some vessels in the deepest part of the Thames; but one of the largest Dutch ships broke the boom, the channel was found to be only partially filled up by the wrecks, and De Witt advanced unopposed as far as Upnor, burning all the ships that lay in his path, some of which were among the finest vessels of the British navy; but, as he failed in his attempts upon Plymouth and Portsmouth,

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and as the Dutch began to be seriously alarmed at the progress which the French army under Turenne was making in Flanders, they also began to wish for peace, which was soon after concluded at Breda, on terms which left neither country any reason for dissatisfaction.

But during the progress of the war, important events had taken place at home. Algernon Sydney, who had always been an enthusiastic Republican, thought the hostility of Louis so favourable to his darling theory, that he applied to that monarch for aid, offering to excite an insurrection in the kingdom if Louis would support the republican party with a gift of 100,000*l.* Louis offered 20,000*l.*, and from this time forth continued his connexions with the disaffected party in England, even while he was also supplying Charles with large sums to render him independent of his people.

The other occurrences to which I have alluded chiefly affected the metropolis. In the summer of 1665 the plague broke out in London with a virulence of which no country in Western Europe had afforded any previous example. At first it attacked only the lower classes, but it soon became more general, till the deaths rose in number to above 1000 a day, and the panic became so universal that all, who had the power to do so, fled in consternation from the infected city. The court and the parliament removed to Oxford, and it was not till the return of the cold weather, which proved more effectual than the skill of the physicians, that the pestilence abated. The next autumn was signalized by a calamity of a different character. On the 3rd of September a fire broke out in a baker's house near London Bridge, which for a while threatened to consume the whole city; it was fanned by a violent gale of wind, and for three days and nights it raged with incredible fury. The houses were built chiefly of wood, and this circumstance caused the conflagration to spread with a rapidity which we of the present day, accustomed to less combustible structures, can scarcely imagine; an eye-witness describes the blaze as so great, that for ten miles round the night was as light as the day. The king and the duke of York hastened to the scene, and afforded a salutary example of courage and personal exertion. As the only means of arresting the progress of the flames, gunpowder was used to blow up the houses which lay in the direction of their progress; and by this expedient the fire was at last stopped; but not till it had destroyed 13,000 houses, 89 churches, and deprived 200,000 people of their property and of their homes. It was undoubtedly accidental, but for a long time it was believed to be the work of incendiaries, and, as the Roman Catholics were the chief objects of the aversion of the populace, the guilt was generally imputed to them; and the monument erected to commemorate the restoration of the city, long bore

an inscription which affirmed that "the burning of this protestant city was begun and carried on by the treachery and malice of the popish faction." The statement was erased by king James, and restored by king William; it has again been effaced in the time of the present generation, as the progress of enlightenment has taught even the bitterest fanatics that the cause which they wish to support is not served by adherence to a notorious falsehood, and that Christians of all denominations, however differing on speculative points of theology, may equally be loyal subjects and virtuous citizens.

The concurrence of these misfortunes, by causing great distress, caused also great discontent; Clarendon, as the chief minister, was the chief object of attack, and the universal shame felt at the recent triumph of the Dutch completed his ruin. The mob in their fury broke his windows, and painted a gibbet on his gate; he had excited the indignation of the country party by vigorously though vainly opposing a foolish and unjust bill to prohibit the importation of Irish cattle or Irish provisions; and had provoked the king by thwarting a still more iniquitous scheme of his own for divorcing his queen, of whom he was weary, and from whom he had ceased to expect an heir, in order to marry a young lady of great beauty, a Miss Stewart; his mistress, lady Castlemaine, the profligate courtiers, the almost more profligate politicians who hoped to rise by his fall, all used their utmost efforts to keep the king's resentment alive, and to stimulate it to active measures; and though Charles could not at first shake off his feelings of respect and attachment to one who had been his admirer from his youth, and who had given such ample proof of fidelity to his best interests, he yielded at last to the incessant energy of lady Castlemaine, and in August, 1667, sent a messenger to Clarendon to demand the surrender of the great seal. For a day or two Charles seemed disposed to proceed no further in his displeasure, but he soon began to feel his presence in the capital a reproach to him. This feeling was artfully taken advantage of by those who feared that there might still be a possibility of his restoration to favour, and who easily induced the ungrateful and heartless king first to consent to his impeachment, and then to urge it on with a steadiness of which, in a better cause, he never showed himself capable. The committee appointed by the commons to prepare the articles of accusation could devise none that were not so wholly preposterous that they were ashamed to detail them to the lords; accordingly they appeared at the bar of the upper house with an impeachment couched in general terms; and, as the lords refused to consider such an indictment any ground for committing him, the two houses were on the verge of a very serious quarrel. While the discussion thus

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raised was proceeding, Clarendon endeavoured to propitiate Charles by a letter, asking for his mercy in very humble terms, to which he received no answer; and at last the king was excited to such animosity against him, that, as the house of peers seemed determined to defend him, he was induced to consent to prorogue the parliament in order that the earl might be tried by the high steward and a small body of peers selected for the purpose of ensuring his condemnation. Clarendon, who had before been advised to take such a step, now determined to fly from the malice of his enemies, and withdrew to France, where Louis assigned him Avignon for a residence.

His relentless enemies were determined to prevent the possibility of his return, and, with the cordial sanction of the king, procured the passing of a bill, by which, unless he surrendered to take his trial before the 1st of February, 1668, he was banished for life; and, if he should ever return at a later period, he was to be subjected to all the penalties of high treason, and be held incapable of pardon without the consent of both houses of parliament. The news of this shameful bill reached him on his journey, and he would have at once returned to face his accusers, had he not been prevented by sudden and severe illness. His exile was not useless to posterity, since to the leisure thus afforded him we owe the completion of his "History of the Rebellion," which he had commenced before the restoration, and which, though unavoidably tinged with partiality, is unrivalled for the discrimination of individual character which it displays, and for the delicate touches of description with which it sets the principal actors in the scene before the reader. Twice did the aged earl entreat Charles to permit his return to his native land. The first time he met with a cold refusal, the second time he did not obtain any reply at all, and he died six years afterwards at Rouen. Though honest and conscientious, he had not always been a wise minister. Returning, after fourteen years' absence from his native land, to become at once its practical ruler, he shut his eyes to the differences that time, and such a time, had wrought in the aspect of affairs; and, his feelings being embittered against the presbyterians by the hardships which, in common with the rest of Charles's court, he had suffered in his exile, he was far more inclined to maintain the highest pretensions of the Church and the royal prerogative unimpaired than when he quitted England. Many, however, of the worst measures of the first years of the reign, such as the Dutch war, were adopted in defiance of his advice. The worthless character of the king added greatly to the difficulties which must have embarrassed even the wisest ministers at such a time as that of his authority; and if we compare the events of his administration with those of the rest of the reign, though the task

of governing the nation had been rendered far easier by his labours, we shall find grounds for estimating very highly the services which he rendered to his king and country, and which by both were most ungratefully requited.

Clarendon's fall made way for the ascendancy of some of the most unprincipled men who ever swayed the destinies of a great nation; the initials of their names, Clifford, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington, and Lauderdale, made up the word Cabal, a French term which had for some years been in fashionable use, and which since this time has become naturalized in the English language. The ablest of them was Ashley, known afterwards as lord Shaftesbury, a man of unsurpassed versatility, fertility of resource, address, and eloquence; though he subsequently impaired his reputation by grasping at the office of chancellor, for which he had no qualification in the way of study or experience, and for which he showed the most complete unfitness. He was a man of very large fortune, which he came into at an early age; and at the beginning of the civil war he exerted himself vigorously and successfully on the side of the king, till he took offence because he conceived that his importance was undervalued, on which he went over to the parliament, showing great courage and some military skill in the operations which were entrusted to his execution. Though the most profligate of men in his private life, he was appointed by Cromwell a member of the Barebone's parliament, and equalled the most violent of the fanatics in the canting phraseology which they affected, and in their ardent republicanism; but, as he refused to sign the declaration required by the Protector from his second parliament, on the ground that the government of one person was against his conscience, he was excluded, and had the honour of being pronounced by Cromwell the most unmanageable man in the three kingdoms. On the death of Cromwell he foresaw the course that events were likely to take, and again became a royalist. In the debates which took place in the house of commons respecting the restoration of Charles he took the leading part, and, being supported by the influence of lord Southampton, whose daughter he had married, by one of the first acts of the restored king he was raised to the peerage as lord Ashley. His father-in-law had died the preceding year. While he lived Ashley had foreborne opposition to the ministers; but, as soon as the tie that bound him to them was dissolved, he began to intrigue against Clarendon, and was one of the principal agents in his fall, on which he became chancellor of the exchequer, and practically the first minister of the crown.

In personal influence with the king he was perhaps equalled by the duke of Buckingham, a man still more worthless than himself, as being wholly destitute of honour in private life, which Shaftes-

bury always preserved; and though clever and accomplished, possessed of no statesman-like ability; but endeared to Charles by having been the companion of his exile, the sharer in, and encourager of, his youthful excesses, and still more by his lively wit and proficiency in the active amusements to which Charles was greatly addicted. His ambition was so little bounded by his capacity, that, at the battle of Worcester, he had solicited the king to give him the command held by Lesley. Since the restoration he had been constantly intriguing against Clarendon, and, by his mimicry and ridicule of him in the private parties of the court, had contributed greatly to lessen Charles's respect and regard for that statesman. He had no political office now, but he purchased the place of master of the horse of the duke of Albemarle, and in virtue of that, was admitted to the most secret councils of the state, though still constantly intriguing against his colleagues, of whom he was jealous, and often even against the king himself.

The others require no particular mention. Clifford was a bold unscrupulous man, and a zealous Roman Catholic: Arlington was reputed a good man of business, but was timid in disposition, covetous, corrupt, and a hypocrite in religion; professing adherence to the Church of England, and being secretly a Roman Catholic; Lauderdale had every vice except such as are cheerful and attractive; tyrannical to his inferiors, abject to those in power, faithless, ambitious, revengeful, and cruel, he preserved his influence with Charles by an unremitting compliance with all his worst passions, and his most unconstitutional designs.

Yet the first measure of these bad men was one of remarkable wisdom, and one that, had the policy which it seemed to indicate been sincerely embraced and persevered in, would have proved eminently beneficial to Europe. On the death of Philip IV. of Spain, Louis XIV. set up a claim to the Spanish Netherlands, as having descended by inheritance to his queen, in preference to the new king, her half-brother by a second marriage; and, entering that country with a powerful army, speedily made himself master of its strongest fortresses. The Dutch were greatly alarmed at such progress made in their immediate neighbourhood by so unscrupulous a ruler as the French king, but saw no hope of arresting it, till sir William Temple, the British ambassador at the Hague, and a man of the most distinguished capacity and virtue, suggested to his court the project of an alliance with both Holland and Sweden, for the purpose of bridling the ambition of France. In their hearts, Charles and his ministers greatly preferred the alliance of France to that of Holland; but the feeling of the nation was very different. The nation hated the French, and was attached to the Dutch as enemies of the French, and also as brother protestants. The parlia-

ment too showed no great confidence in the ministry, and had lately rejected a bill to secure toleration to the Nonconformists by a large majority; so, to conciliate the discontented, the treaty, as projected by Temple, was agreed to, and the triple alliance thus formed compelled Louis to agree to a peace on the terms of relinquishing a great portion of his recent acquisitions.

The alliance and its immediate consequences gave universal satisfaction; yet it was only a delusion practised on the people. At the very time that Temple was arranging its conditions, Charles was proposing a clandestine treaty to Louis; and Clifford, the lord treasurer, suffered the secret resolution of the court to escape him, telling one of his acquaintances that, in spite of the exultation of the people, they would soon see another Dutch war.

It is easy to prophesy truly when the accomplishment of the prediction depends upon oneself; but in this instance the ministers themselves did not know the whole of Charles's designs. The duke of York had lately become a Roman Catholic, as had his duchess, the daughter of Clarendon, who died about this time. The king also had embraced the same doctrines, though the fact was never revealed till his death. He was desirous, however, to publish it at the first favourable opportunity, and proposed to Louis to bring over the whole English people to popery, and, as soon as that was accomplished, to join him in a war against Holland, with the object of dividing that country between the two monarchs and his own nephew, the young prince of Orange. To aid him in the execution of these plans, he required from Louis a yearly contribution of 200,000*l.*, and 6000 French troops. Louis, whose treasury was rich, was willing to give the money, and probably still more willing to introduce so strong a force into England; but, as he was too shrewd to think the conversion of a whole nation like the English to a religion they detested so much as popery as easy a measure as it seemed to Charles, he desired that the subjugation of Holland should precede any attempt at the conversion of England. Charles adhered for a while to his own proposal, till Louis sent his sister, the duchess of Orleans, to Dover, to gain him over to his views; and, as Henrietta brought him over a new mistress of great beauty, her arguments proved irresistible, and he consented to postpone the interests of his new religion to the wishes of his ally.

CHAPTER XLVI.

CHARLES II. (CONTINUED).

LOUIS was right, as the duke of York proved some years later to his cost, in supposing it no easy matter to bring the English again into subjection to the pope; but the difficulties of carrying out that portion of the treaty which he desired to have executed first were scarcely less, and were such as few princes but Charles would have been at once bold enough and base enough to grapple with. He pretended to the parliament that he had need of a large fleet to carry out the stipulations of the triple alliance, and to curb the aggressive spirit of Louis, and by this false pretence he obtained from them a grant of 800,000*l.*; and then, as it was clear that the sum would last but a short time, and equally clear that the parliament, when aware of the deceit which had been practised upon it, would be in no humour to give any more, he proceeded, by the advice of Shaftesbury and Clifford, to refuse the repayment of the sums which the goldsmiths and bankers, as was usual, had advanced to the exchequer, and thus, at the expense of a serious derangement of the whole trade and commerce of the kingdom, of the extensive ruin of individuals, and of the violation of the good faith of the state, he acquired an additional sum of 1,300,000*l.* more. He was now sufficiently provided. Having cheated his subjects, it was not to be wondered at that he did not think himself bound to be more honest to his enemies, and, before issuing any declaration of war, he sent out a squadron to attack the Dutch Smyrna fleet, which was daily expected, and the value of which was estimated at a million and a half of money. The Dutch commanders, however, had had some warning of their danger, and, being prepared for an attack, beat off their assailants with but trifling loss; and then, in March, 1672, Charles and Louis declared war against them simultaneously. England's share of the war was confined to three or four naval actions in this and the following year, in which the duke of York, as admiral, showed great intrepidity, but which were productive of no decisive results. But the French attack was of a more formidable character. One hundred thousand men under the prince de Condé, the most intrepid of assailants, and Turenne, the greatest general, who, at that time, had ever been seen in France, overran half the country, and advanced almost to the gates of Amsterdam.

The imminent danger divided instead of uniting the Dutch people. They broke out into terrible disorders, massacred their chief magistrate, De Witt, who had negotiated the triple alliance, and placed the young prince of Orange at the head of the government. To his unconquerable courage and patriotic firmness they owed their preservation. It was in vain that Charles and Louis endeavoured to seduce him by the offer of the absolute sovereignty of a portion of the country if he would acquiesce in their subjugation of the rest. His noble ambition preferred being the saviour of the whole to being the despotic master of a part. His spirited exhortations roused the whole people to a steady resistance, and to determine rather to flee, if need should arise, to their distant settlements in the furthest extremity of the globe, than to remain as slaves to the enemies of their religion and their freedom. In the number of their forces, and the skill of their generals, the Dutch were, of course, vastly inferior to the French; but they had a resource against invaders possessed by no other people in Europe. They opened their dikes, and let the sea inundate the whole country, till it resembled one vast lake, with the cities rising out of it, like the hundred isles of Venice. The invaders were forced to retreat. The respite thus obtained gave time for negotiations to secure the aid of Austria and Spain; and, though the conditions demanded by Louis and Charles as the price of peace were at first such as would have laid the independence of Holland wholly at their mercy, they were compelled bit by bit to recede from them; and, in 1674, peace was concluded between England and Holland, in which, though the Dutch made some sacrifices, the English reaped no advantage at all commensurate with the exertions they had made for the prosecution of the war.

Charles had been compelled to accede to this peace by the parliament, which he was forced to reassemble in order to obtain the necessary supplies. They highly disapproved of the war; but they were still more displeased at the toleration which had lately been given to the Roman Catholics. The duke of York's conversion to popery had been made public, though it was thought prudent to disguise the king's adoption of the same doctrines; and, as a step towards the carrying out of the agreement secretly made with Louis, Charles had lately, by his own authority, issued a proclamation, suspending all the penal laws against every sort of recusants or nonconformists. Though this declaration of indulgence, as it was called, affected the Protestant Dissenters equally with the Roman Catholics, and though hitherto the severities exercised against the Protestant Dissenters had, as they were a very numerous body, produced very wide-spread discontent, the declaration set the whole kingdom in a ferment. The members of the Church

A.D. 1674.

of England looked on the toleration of any other sect as an injury done to themselves ; and the puritan party, like the envious man in the fable, detested the Roman Catholics so much, that they would rather be persecuted as long as their enemies were also persecuted, than tolerated if their enemies were to enjoy the same indulgence. The house of commons largely shared in these sentiments, and, as soon as they had voted the necessary supplies, began to raise the question whether the king had the power to issue such a proclamation. It was admitted that he could dispense with penal statutes in favour of particular individuals, but (though this admission, if carried out logically to its ultimate conclusion, would have authorized every possible exercise of a similar authority) it was strenuously denied that he could dispense with a whole set of statutes against whole classes of persons. Shaftesbury, who had first suggested the measure, now, alarmed at the general outcry, turned round, pronounced it illegal, and it was cancelled ; nor was the house contented with the triumph thus gained, but it proceeded to impose a test, which exacted the reception of the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England, and a formal denial of transubstantiation from all holders of office in the kingdom ; and this law, which excluded Protestant Dissenters as well as Roman Catholics from office, continued in force till it was repealed in the time of the duke of Wellington's ministry, at the end of the reign of George IV.

The dispensing power had grown up when the principles of liberty were not understood, and when the people were not inclined to quarrel with any exertion of the prerogative which did not involve the personal oppression of any one ; but it was clearly incompatible with the precise limitations of authority requisite in a constitutional government, and was completely extinguished by the bill of rights.

The test act deprived the duke of York of his office of admiral, and Clifford of the treasurer's staff ; and, having thus got rid of the most respectable members of the cabal, the opposition in the commons attacked the rest with increased vigour, and speedily drove them all from office, except Lauderdale, who retained the administration of the affairs of Scotland. Arlington and Clifford retired from public life, but Buckingham and Shaftesbury went into furious opposition. Shaftesbury, in particular, finding that he had been deceived by the king, who had kept back from him his agreement with Louis to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion, putting himself forward as the chief supporter of the protestant interest, lecturing the king on his favour to the popish faction, as he termed it, and openly opposing the marriage of the duke of York with Mary, princess of Modena. The arbitrary temper

of the new lord treasurer, earl Danby, soon afforded him a more reasonable opening for an attack, when he brought forward in the house of lords a bill, requiring every holder of office and every member of parliament to declare all resistance to the kingly power, and any attempt whatever to alter the government in church or state, criminal. Against so monstrous a proposal it was not difficult to make a stand, and though Danby now introduced the practice of bribing members of parliament, and carried it to a great extent in both houses, the measure was only passed through the lords with great difficulty, and was suffered to drop without even being presented to the commons.

In spite, however, of his zeal for the prerogative, Danby was not a favourite of the king; he was avowedly an enemy to the alliance with France, and was eager to commit the administration of foreign affairs to Temple, the negotiator of the triple alliance, and the firm friend of Holland. The idea of war with France was, as usual popular; and in spite of the heroic resistance which the Dutch were still making to Louis, there appeared no other means of saving Holland from becoming his prey. At the beginning of the year 1677 the parliament presented an address to the king, begging him to form such alliances as, by saving Holland and the Netherlands, would thus quiet the fears of his people; and Charles, to whom promises never cost anything, gave them a favourable answer, in which he demanded a supply to enable him to carry out their views, pledging his royal word that they should never repent reposing such confidence in him. At this very time he was receiving a yearly pension from Louis to secure his neutrality. The parliament gave him a small sum, but refused him the larger supply that he demanded. To conciliate them further, he now, in spite of the reluctance of the duke of York, her father, gave his niece, the princess Mary, in marriage to the prince of Orange; and sent an ambassador, though not such as the opposition would have chosen, to support the proposals of peace made by the Dutch in the treaty which was on the point of being concluded at Nimeguen.

This conduct of his naturally made the French king doubt him, and unwilling to see the parliament furnish him with the means of being too powerful, lest that power should really be turned against France, and to guard against this danger Louis began to intrigue with the leaders of the opposition, or country party, as they were popularly called, and the general corruption of the age aided his views in a way that cannot be recorded or remembered by an Englishman without shame for the almost universal degeneracy of his countrymen. The favourite cry of the country party had long been for war with France, yet the leaders did not scruple now to take bribes from the king of France to oppose the measures of their own

A.D. 1678.

sovereign ; only two of the party, lord Hollis and lord Russell, son of the earl of Bedford, are free from the charge of pecuniary corruption, and even they afforded Louis their zealous co-operation, though they disdained to enrich themselves by their complaisance ; the truth being that they and their fellow-plotters were as desirous as Louis could be to keep Charles weak : Louis, lest, if he became powerful, he might turn his arms against him ; they, lest he might employ them to crush their religion and their civil liberties.

Louis was to the full as unscrupulous and faithless as Charles ; and believing that Danby would never cease to be his enemy, contrived to have the fact of his having been accessory to applications for money from France divulged to the commons. They prepared to impeach him ; and, though the king dissolved the parliament in order to put a stop to such a proceeding, the general indignation against him as a tool of France would probably have led to serious disturbances, had not the popular attention been diverted from his delinquencies by one of the most singular events that ever disfigured the history of an enlightened nation.

In the autumn of 1678 it began to be reported that a popish plot had been discovered, having no less an object than the murder of the king, of all the chief protestants of the kingdom, and the entire re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion. Shaftesbury has been accused of having invented the whole story, but it seems so incredible that he or any one could have foreseen the iniquitous absurdities into which so improbable a fiction excited the whole nation, that we may acquit him of that guilt, though, when others had devised the tale, he supported them with the whole of his power. A clergyman named Titus Oates, a man of such notorious infamy, that he had been expelled from a living, and deprived of a chaplaincy of the navy, laid informations of an extensive plot before sir Edmondbury Godfrey, a Middlesex magistrate. According to his sworn evidence, the duke of York's confessor and the queen's physician were both concerned in the plot ; Charles was to be stabbed, to be poisoned, to be shot with silver bullets ; the Jesuits had resolved that if he would not become R. C. (a Roman Catholic), he should no longer be C. R. ; all the chief cities in England were to be burnt, as London had been burnt two years before ; even the duke of York, zealous papist as he was, was to be murdered, or, as Oates reported the language of the chief of the Jesuits, " was to go to pot," if he scrupled to approve of their actions, or to submit to their conditions.

A day or two after Godfrey had received Oates's depositions, he was found murdered in the fields in the environs of London ; and it was at once concluded that he had been murdered by the Jesuits in revenge for having listened to Oates's evidence. No further

testimony to its truth was required ; he lay in state for some days, and was buried with extraordinary pomp as a martyr to protestantism ; and then the whole nation busied themselves to find victims to be sacrificed to his shade. Oates's revelations increased in horror and importance as he saw they obtained belief. As vipers are brought to life by the sun, his success brought out fresh swarms of informers ; the chief of whom were Bedloe, Dugdale, and Tuberville, wretches, if possible, more infamous than Oates himself ; and on their information hundreds and hundreds of loyal citizens, some of them among the noblest of the land, were brought to trial. For a while no one was acquitted ; Scroggs, the chief justice, one of the worst men who ever polluted the bench, prompted the witnesses, browbeat the prisoners, and publicly thanked the juries that convicted them. Charles, though almost alone he had the sense from the first to disbelieve and in private to ridicule the whole story, had not the courage to stand between the popular madness and its prey ; and, to his everlasting disgrace, consented to the execution of those whom he knew to be innocent. The only spark of feeling or principle that he showed, was in refusing to allow the queen herself to be involved in these atrocious accusations. Oates had dared to impute to her also acquaintance with the plot, but here Charles interposed. " They think," said he, " that I want a new wife, but for all that I will not suffer an innocent woman to be abused." To such a height did the delusion go, that his brother peers convicted lord Stafford, a nobleman of most unblemished character, of accession to it, while lord Russell, generally a man of virtue and humanity, carried his rancour so far as to question the king's right to remit the more inhuman parts of his punishment, and to sentence him to be merely beheaded ; and in Ireland, the Roman Catholic primate of that kingdom, archbishop Plunket, was put to death on a similar accusation.

Encouraged by the apparent inability of any one to resist them, the protestant party, as they called themselves, headed by Shaftesbury, now aimed at higher game, and proposed to exclude the duke of York from the succession to the throne. The parliament, which had been lately dissolved, had deprived Roman Catholic peers of their seats in parliament, and it was only by a majority of two that an exception was made in the duke's favour. Charles persuaded his brother to retire from the kingdom. Shaftesbury had reckoned upon being able to induce the king to abandon James's rights, by appearing to favour the claims of the duke of Monmouth, a natural son of the king, born before the restoration, a young man of great personal attractions and accomplishments, but possessed of no abilities whatever, though adorned by an engaging courtesy and humanity which had gained him an extensive popularity in Scot-

A.D. 1679.

land, where he had been lately sent to quell an insurrection, into which the more violent Covenanters had broken out, and where he had performed the duty entrusted to him with considerable success. If Charles had consented to his claims being brought forward, Shaftesbury's party was prepared to support Monmouth's legitimacy with forged certificates; but Charles, on the contrary, for the satisfaction of his brother, signed a formal declaration that Monmouth had no such pretensions. They then prevailed on the duchess of Portsmouth, the king's favourite mistress, to use her influence against James, by leading her to hope that the kingdom might be settled on her eldest son; but on this one point Charles was firm. He personally canvassed members of parliament to oppose a bill which was brought in to exclude his brother from the throne, declaring that he would never consent to it, though he offered to sanction considerable limitations on the power of his successor, and to grant any concessions necessary to provide for the security of the Established Church. James himself would hear of no limitations; and, relying on the support of the English Roman Catholics, and of the episcopal party in Scotland, whom he believed to be attached to himself, he began to talk to the French ambassador of resisting by force any attempts to deprive him of power; but colonel Churchill, the same officer who afterwards immortalized the name of Marlborough by services such as no subject at that time had ever equalled, and who had already obtained considerable influence over his mind, pointed out so plainly the impossibility that such a plan could succeed that it was abandoned, and the duke was forced to submit, and to trust to his brother's affection, and to circumstances. The prince of Orange was very desirous to see the exclusion bill passed, thinking that it would lead to the power being vested in his wife, or in himself; and Fagel, the Dutch minister, sent the king an earnest memorial from the states of Holland in favour of the measure, though William afterwards assured Charles that he had only sanctioned the presentation of such a memorial, because he thought that, though the passing such a bill would quiet the nation for the time, it would ultimately be inoperative, and that he had never had a real purpose of attacking the rights of his own father-in-law. Charles had too much shrewdness to believe, and too much civility to appear to disbelieve him, but he was well aware of his real views; remembering that when a little while before he had suggested to the prince a scheme for establishing a regency after his own death, with the princess Mary as regent, William had discountenanced it, because no power was offered to himself. The bill was keenly contested in more than one parliament. In 1680 it passed the commons, but was rejected by the house of lords, chiefly in consequence of a speech by lord Halifax, displaying un-

rivalled eloquence and power of argument. After that parliament was dissolved, a similar bill was brought forward in 1681; and the commons insisted so strongly on carrying it, that Charles had no resource but another dissolution, and no other parliament was assembled during his reign.

While this struggle was proceeding, the king, by the advice of sir W. Temple, had endeavoured to introduce a new principle into the government, giving the privy council a determinate character and position, and making it consist of thirty members; fifteen of whom were to be ministers, or great legal or ecclesiastical functionaries, while fifteen were to be men invested with no office, independent representatives, as it were, of the nation at large; but the plan, however ingenious, would not work with such a sovereign as Charles. In spite of his promise to be guided by the council in all things, he continually acted in defiance of their advice, the independent members gradually desisted from their attendance, and the council fell to pieces before the end of the year.

There had, however, been introduced into the council two men, who continued the chief ministers till the end of the reign, the earl of Sunderland, secretary of state, and the marquis of Halifax, lord privy seal: Sunderland, an able man, but perfidious, cruel, and servile, destitute of all religion, but endowed with such fascination of manners and such address as to obtain an ascendancy over the minds even of those who most distrusted or most despised him; Halifax, a man of far loftier talents, and of most eminent virtues, but of an enlightened wisdom and humanity in advance of his age, disapproving equally of the violence of both parties, and often attempting, though in vain, to save the victims of each. Such a man was hardly calculated to be a sharer in any ministry at such a time; nor, indeed, could he have been so at all, had the present system prevailed, by which every member of a cabinet is responsible for every act of that cabinet; but in those days no one was expected to concern himself with any thing beyond the business of his own department; nor was any one conceived to have the slightest power to control, or the slightest right to object to the acts of his colleagues.

It was about this time that the names of Whig and Tory first began to be used to distinguish the two rival parties in the state. As the term Whig, the origin of which has been already explained, was derived from Scotland, so that of Tory came from Ireland, where it was given to the Papists, who took shelter in the bogs from the severity of the laws. From them it was borrowed to stigmatize the friends of Papists, especially such as objected to exclude a popish successor from the throne; and, by an easy gradation, came at last to be applied to all those whose first principle

A.D. 1682

in politics was to uphold the prerogatives and the dignity of the crown,

Scotland had been for many years in a disturbed state. The restoration of episcopacy had kindled a spirit of resistance all over that country, which, in 1668, had broken out into open insurrection. That outbreak had been quickly put down, but Lauderdale, who was sent down to regulate affairs, though he stifled opposition for a while, did, in reality, by his needless cruelty, engender a far more resolute feeling of opposition, which broke out ten years later. Archbishop Sharp, a prelate utterly unworthy of his high position, had made himself greatly detested by his severity towards the Non-conformists. At last, in 1679, they murdered him, and again took arms. Colonel Graham, an officer of brilliant talents and high honour, but too vehement a partisan of the prerogative to be as merciful as reason and indeed policy also required towards men so conscientiously resolute, was repulsed at first by the insurgents, who could not be subdued till Monmouth arrived at the head of a powerful reinforcement, routed them at Bothwell Bridge, and treated them, when defeated, with a humanity which promised better results than Claverhouse's severity, or the wanton cruelty of Lauderdale; but the next year the duke of York went to Scotland to take the government there upon himself, and renewed all the severities of Lauderdale. On a most trumped-up accusation of treason, Argyll, the head of the presbyterian party, was convicted; and, though the sentence of death pronounced against him was not executed, his estates were confiscated, and he was forced to make his escape to Holland. Vast numbers of Covenanters were outlawed. Many were hanged for refusing to declare the death of archbishop Sharp to be murder; and, at last, the whole country was placed under martial law; and the officers in command of the troops studied, not unsuccessfully, to rival the iniquities of the civil judges.

While the duke was thus making the king's government detested in Scotland, Sunderland was allowed to pursue a somewhat similar course in England. The violent conduct of Shaftesbury and the Whigs in pressing the exclusion bill, had produced a temporary reaction in Charles's favour, and the unpopularity under which he had long laboured among the upper and middle classes was exchanged for feelings of returning loyalty and confidence. Sunderland thought he might venture to avail himself of this state of things to chastise the Whigs for their late violence in the conduct of the bill, and began a series of prosecutions remarkable for the illegal measures taken to ensure convictions. The first victim was a carpenter and joiner, named College, a noisy and illiterate demagogue. He was prosecuted on the charge of having planned an

attack on the king's guards. The written instructions which he gave to his counsel were taken from him, in order to learn the grounds of his defence, and used as evidence against him; yet the grand jury threw out the indictment. A more complaisant jury was found at Oxford, to which city he was removed for trial, and where he was speedily convicted and executed. An indictment against Shaftesbury was also thrown out by the grand jury; and as the sheriffs of London could not be terrified into impanelling juries subservient to the court, it was determined to deprive the city of its charter. It was not difficult to find some irregularities of which the corporation had been guilty. The judges of the Court of King's Bench decided that they were of such a character that the charter was forfeited. The precedent was made use of against other towns in which Whig influence predominated, and borough after borough, on pretences of this kind, was stripped of its ancient franchises and privileges.

These iniquities again produced a deep feeling of discontent, which was increased by the return of the duke of York to England, and his resumption of the administration of the navy; and which soon broke out in a formidable conspiracy. Some of the most violent of the Whigs formed a plot to raise the nation in arms against the government; on which plot a lower class of conspirators engrafted another, which had for its object the assassination of the king and the duke of York. The first plot was rash and impracticable; the second was very nearly meeting with success; its chiefs were, Ferguson, a man grown old in plots and treasons, and Colonel Rumsey, a distinguished officer, but a frantic Republican. They concerted a plan with a malster named Rumbold, who had a farm called the Rye House, on the road from Newmarket to London, near which it was agreed to stop the king on his way from the races, by upsetting a cart in the road, and to shoot him and the duke. The plot was well laid, and was only defeated by the accident of the house in which the king lodged at Newmarket being burnt, and by the king, in consequence, returning to London earlier than he had intended.

Before the scheme could be revived, both plots were betrayed; and it was found that Shaftesbury, Monmouth, Russell, and Algernon Sidney had been among the leaders; and lord Essex was also implicated, though he had but lately been a lord of the treasury. Shaftesbury fled to Holland, where he soon after died. Monmouth threw himself on his father's mercy, and was pardoned. Against the others it was determined to proceed; not indeed on the charge of having conspired the death of the king, but on that of a treasonable project of raising an insurrection. Essex killed himself in the Tower; the others were tried separately. It seem-

A.D. 1684.

probable that they were guilty; but it is certain that their guilt was not proved by such a weight of evidence as is required by the law of high treason. The most criminal acts alleged against lord Russell were proved only by a single witness, while the law requires two; and had not the jury been carefully packed by the new sheriffs, who had been illegally thrust into office for that purpose, he would have been acquitted. He was convicted and executed; and his fate has become especially famous from the heroic fortitude displayed by his wife, a daughter of lord Southampton, who assisted him at his trial, took notes of the evidence, exerted all her influence to procure his pardon, and, when all hope was over, forbore to increase his troubles by a sight of her own affliction, but took leave of him with a composed resignation, and cherished his memory through a long life with a sorrowful but unchanging affection.

Sidney, who had always been a violent Republican, was perhaps more deeply implicated in these conspiracies than Russell; but the evidence against him was even more defective. Jefferies, soon about to render himself for ever infamous, had lately been made chief justice, and exerted himself to reward those to whom he owed his promotion, by the utmost unfairness towards the prisoner. He too was convicted and executed, but though the illegal means by which his conviction was procured have often caused him to be held up by a party as a martyr to the liberties of the people, there can be no doubt that he was nothing of the kind, but a thoroughly bad subject; he had been bribed by the French king, he had been a chief promoter of the mischievous intrigues with the French ambassador, and had constantly supported all the schemes of Louis both here and in the Netherlands.

The violence of these measures, the open contempt of law displayed in them, and in the duke of York's return to office, alarmed lord Halifax, who tried in vain to inspire Charles with ideas of government more in harmony with the constitution; but he had lately got a new adviser, in the second son of the late lord Clarendon, whom he had created earl of Rochester, and made first lord of the treasury, and who was quite as zealous in inculcating on him the notion of his right to unlimited power, as Halifax could be in persuading him to acquiesce in its constitutional limitations. It was in vain that Halifax pressed the king to summon a parliament, as he was bound to do by law, since more than three years had elapsed since the dissolution of the last, to break his league with Louis, and to revive the alliance with Holland. Rochester, supported by his brother-in-law, the duke of York, counteracted all his wholesome counsels; and though it was impossible to retain him at the treasury, as it was proved that a large sum had been lost to the nation by his mismanagement or dishonesty, he was

only transferred to the presidency of the council, at that time considered a more important office; so that, as Halifax said, while bad servants were generally kicked down stairs, he was the first instance on record of one being kicked up stairs; and he was succeeded at the treasury by lord Godolphin, a man of moderate talents, but of great prudence and address, who, in subsequent reigns, became a very important person in the state.

Yet, in the last months of his life, Charles was inclined to follow Halifax's advice. Louis having made himself master of Strasbourg and Luxembourg, and having, therefore, no further need of Charles's alliance, discontinued the yearly payments which he had so long made to him; and Charles was not only very indignant at his desertion of him, but was also thrown by it into great difficulties for want of money. He was likewise greatly annoyed at seeing that the unpopularity of the duke of York was in some degree reflected on himself, so that he, who, in spite of all the faults of his private life and of his government, had always been the idol of the populace, was now greeted in public with less cordiality than formerly; and it is not impossible that these considerations might have led to a change in his policy, when, on the 2nd of February, 1685, he was attacked by apoplexy, from which he recovered sufficiently to be formally admitted into the Roman Catholic Church, of which he had long been a secret member, but which proved fatal on the 6th, when, after four days of great suffering, borne with unexpected fortitude, he died at Whitehall, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-fifth after his restoration.

No man endowed with so much natural ability, and so void of any disposition to tyranny or cruelty, ever made so bad a king as Charles II. Besides wit and sprightliness in conversation, he had great shrewdness, penetration into character, and, in the opinion of those who were best acquainted with him, very eminent talents for business; but these great natural gifts were so completely buried under the indolence of selfish voluptuousness as to be useless both to himself and to his people; and that same indolence led him, in spite of the good nature and humanity of his disposition, to acquiesce in the shameful cruelties practised by his ministers in Scotland, and in a long series of judicial murders in England perpetrated on those whom he not only knew to be innocent, but who had no other crime laid to their charge but that of adherence to a religion in which he himself secretly believed. His submitting to become a pensioner of the French king and uniting with him in a conspiracy against the religion and liberties of his subjects, is a crime of still deeper dye in the sovereign of an independent state. His prodigality to worthless favourites so exhausted the treasures that ought to have been applied to the service of the state, that an

A.D. 1685.

enemy of inferior power sailed up the Thames, insulted our harbours, and threatened the capital: and England, which, in the time of the Protector, had been the arbitress of Europe, lost all weight in the affairs of the Continent, and was openly despised and trampled on by her only ally.

In his private conduct Charles was as profligate as in his public life; setting an open example of vice and debauchery to his subjects, which they were only too ready to follow, so that his reign is still a by-word for shameless indecency. Against vices so great and so various, easy good humour and affability to his inferiors, the only virtues attributed to him, are but a poor set-off. Some allowance may be made for him if we consider the precarious fortunes, and, for a prince, unparalleled difficulties of his early life, which may, to some extent, dispose us to mingle pity with our censure, but which can never prevent us from condemning his reign as dishonourable and calamitous, and himself as utterly regardless of the interests, and unworthy of the affection of his people.

CHAPTER XLVII.

JAMES II.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

Emperor.
Leopold.

<i>France.</i> Louis XIV.
<i>Spain.</i> Charles II.

Pope
Innocent XI.

A.D.
1685.

WITHIN an hour after the death of Charles, the privy council assembled at the palace, where the new king, in a brief speech, vindicated himself from the suspicion of being desirous of arbitrary power; and, praising the constant loyalty of the Church of England, promised steadily to maintain the established government both in Church and state. His partisans were delighted at his language, proclaiming everywhere, as his morose temper and the unyielding rigour of his disposition had created a mistaken belief in his sincerity, that the nation had now full security for the preservation of all its rights, in the promises of a king who had never broken his word. He soon undeceived them; he came to the throne with

the fixed resolution of making his power absolute, and of re-establishing the Roman Catholic religion ; and every step taken by him was soon seen to have reference alone to these primary objects of his policy.

The duke of Ormond, who had long governed Ireland with fidelity, ability, and eminent success, but whose firm adherence to the principles of the constitution and to the Protestant religion were equally well known, was recalled, and treated with marked disrespect by the king and his ministers. Halifax, though the rejection of the exclusion bill in the preceding reign had been mainly owing to his eloquence, because he had distinguished himself at other times as a firm opponent of arbitrary power, was removed from the privy seal to a less influential office, on purpose to mark the slight esteem in which he was held by the king. All authority was placed in the hands of Sunderland, the most unprincipled of men, and of Rochester, the constant advocate of intolerance and absolutism ; while James accepted, with tears in his eyes, and with the most abject protestations of gratitude and subservience, a present of money from Louis, whose tyrannical disposition and open contempt for religious liberty and good faith had been lately shown by the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and by the cruelties practised on all adherents of the reformed religion.

These indications of the future spirit of the government were followed up, and in some instances anticipated, by conduct in direct violation of the established laws. The revenue had expired with the life of the late king, but James, by the advice of Jefferies, issued a proclamation commanding the taxes to be levied as usual ; thus at once reverting to the most illegal of his father's acts, which first provoked an active resistance to his authority. His next measures were still more offensive to the general feelings of the community. On the very first Sunday after his accession, he went publicly with all the ensigns of royalty to hear mass, and ordered the doors of the chapel to be thrown wide open that all who chose might see him engaged in an act of worship declared illegal by laws passed in the late reign. At the coronation, which took place on St. George's day, though performed by a Protestant archbishop, all the portions of the service most at variance with the rites of popery were omitted ; and persons were admitted both to military and civil offices without taking the tests which had been enacted as indispensable to qualify them for such preferment.

Yet, in spite of these arbitrary and illegal proceedings, the parliament, which assembled at the beginning of the summer, was as compliant as if there had been nothing in them to awaken either resentment or suspicion. They voted him for life a revenue of 2,000,000*l.*, a sum larger than had been conferred on any former

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sovereign. After the suppression of Monmouth's rebellion they granted him a large addition to this revenue, expressly for the support of a standing army; and passed a law that any one moving in either house of parliament to alter the descent of the crown should be deemed guilty of high treason. In two matters only did they resist the king's wishes; they refused to modify the test act, and the habeas corpus act, passed in the late reign, the only safeguard of the subject against arbitrary imprisonment. The Scottish estates were equally submissive; they also settled on him for life an income larger than that which had been enjoyed by his predecessors, and especially consulted his hatred to Nonconformists by making it a capital offence to preach in a conventicle, or to attend any ministration in the open air, such as were so much in use in that country.

James had gratified his feelings of religion and revenge at the same time, by having Oates and Dangerfield brought to trial for their manifold perjuries committed in the prosecutions for the popish plot, and in causing sentences of unprecedented severity to be passed upon them. They were pilloried, flogged through the whole extent of London, and imprisoned for life. Dangerfield died; but Oates, whose death was, no doubt, also intended to be the consequence of his punishment, survived to receive a pardon and a pension from king William. A bill was also brought into parliament to reverse the attainder of lord Stafford, but was interrupted by the rebellion of Monmouth, which turned the attention of both houses to the present defence of the monarchy.

The duke of Monmouth was in Holland, to which country he had retired after the discovery of the Rye House plot; lord Grey and others, who had thought it concerned their safety to place the Channel between themselves and the displeasure of their sovereign, had sought the same asylum, as had several of the Scotch Nonconformists, the earl of Argyll, Fletcher of Saltoun, a man of great and varied ability, and many others of inferior influence, talents, or celebrity. Many of them had looked forward to the death of Charles as the termination of their exile, but when James succeeded to the crown without opposition, they naturally looked on their prospects as impaired rather than benefited by the change of rulers, and confessed to themselves that they had no hope unless he could be cast down from the throne. With these feelings they sought to awaken the ambition of Monmouth, whose former aspirations had been no secret, and, with exaggerated statements of his own popularity, of their influence, and of the general apprehension caused by James's accession, urged him to revive his pretensions, and to prepare to assert them by force. Monmouth, though but little inclined to, or calculated to succeed in so daring an enter-

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prise had not the firmness to refuse their solicitations, and began to prepare for the expedition; ships, which lay at Amsterdam, were hired to convey the exiles across with arms, ammunition, and provisions sufficient to supply the forces by which they expected to be joined. It was determined to divide the invasion. Argyll was to land in Scotland, where his influence was pre-eminent above that of every other noble; and Monmouth was to make a descent upon England. James had received some intelligence of what was preparing against him, which he communicated to the Dutch ambassador, demanding that their country should not furnish aid to his enemies. The ambassador undertook that every exertion should be made in Holland to prevent an expedition sailing from the Dutch ports; but, nevertheless, both expeditions did sail; the fact apparently being that the prince of Orange, for a twofold reason, was willing to connive at them. If Monmouth failed, as his acuteness must have made him inclined to expect, a dangerous rival would be removed from his path, if ever another opportunity for unseating James should offer itself: if Monmouth succeeded, his light, unstable character, and want of capacity made it very improbable that he would be able to maintain himself on the throne; and, in such a case, William would find it easier to overthrow him than James. Early in May Argyll landed in the Highlands: he was opposed by but a small force; but his followers were divided by dissensions, and at last dispersed without daring to strike one blow for the cause for which they had thus invaded a powerful kingdom. He himself was taken prisoner, and executed under the sentence passed upon him some years before.

It was nearly the middle of June when Monmouth landed at Lyme, in Dorsetshire, and announced the purpose of his landing in a declaration charging upon James personally all the crimes with which the perjury of some and the credulity of others had ever loaded the Roman Catholics; promising all the reforms which had ever been desired by the wildest enthusiasts, and declaring his own legitimacy, and, as a natural consequence, his right to the sovereignty of Great Britain, which, however, he promised not to assume till a free parliament had decided in favour of his pretensions. He had selected the western counties for his landing because in that district he was well known, and had enjoyed great popularity in a progress which he had made some years before, which was not yet forgotten by the common people. The higher classes feared to join him, but the populace flocked in numbers to his standard, and in a few days he found himself at the head of a force, respectable in point of numbers, but without experience or discipline; indeed, the want of this last quality soon lost him the services of the ablest of his followers. A yeoman of the name of

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Dare, a man of influence in the district, behaved with such violence to Fletcher of Saltoun, that Fletcher shot him on the spot ; and, as his comrades cried out for vengeance, Fletcher was forced to quit Monmouth's camp to return to the continent.

The government was not idle ; but as the news of Monmouth's landing reached London they sent troops of all kinds to check his progress. The lord-lieutenants called out the militia, the trainbands were put under arms, the regular regiments which were in Holland and Scotland were summoned to the capital to defend the state, and those which were in London or the neighbourhood were at once marched to the west, under lord Feversham, with Churchill, now a peer, as his second in command. At the same time the parliament passed a bill of attainder against Monmouth, and offered a large reward for his apprehension. After one or two skirmishes of no importance, except to show the military inefficiency of Monmouth's recruits, and many marches and counter-marches, on the 5th of July the two armies came in sight of one another on the plain of Sedgemoor, near Bridgewater. Monmouth had already yielded to the entreaties of the majority of his followers, had allowed himself to be proclaimed king, and had been presented with a royal standard embroidered for him by a party of young girls, enthusiasts in his cause, which now floated proudly in the centre of his army. Feversham and Churchill had about 4000 men, he himself about 6000 ; and, having found that the inferiority of his troops in skill and discipline more than counterbalanced their superiority in numbers, he endeavoured to equalize the chances of battle by the surprise of a night attack ; but the sentinels were on the alert, the surprise failed ; Churchill, on whom the chief part of the duty as commander fell, encountered his assailants with consummate coolness and skill ; and though Monmouth's raw forces fought better than could have been expected, they were totally routed. For a time Monmouth fought gallantly on foot at the head of his men ; but, as soon as he saw that all hope of victory was over, he mounted a horse and fled from the field. He was vigorously pursued as he hastened towards the southern coast, and after some days was discovered hiding in a ditch near Cranborne Chase. He now sought in vain to make his peace with the king : but James never forgave, and Monmouth's offences had no title to forgiveness. He wrote submissive letters, throwing the blame on those who had, as he said, persuaded him against his will to embark in his late enterprise. James exulted in the meanness and abasement of his enemy ; but disgraced himself by having him brought bound into his presence to reproach and insult him. A trial was not needed, as the parliamentary attainder was sufficient for his execution, and, on the 15th of July, he was beheaded on Tower Hill.

He had merited his fate ; but the cruelties inflicted upon his supporters have left an indelible stain on the memory of the king ; rendered deeper, if possible, by the base motives in obedience to which the most powerful, and therefore the most guilty of the rebels, were spared. Those who could purchase pardons by money, such as lord Grey, and Cochrane, the son of lord Dundonald, were allowed to do so : others, such as Ferguson and Goodenough, secured impunity by the betrayal of their associates ; but for those who had neither money nor information to give, there was no mercy. In the moment of victory Feversham had butchered scores of his prisoners in cold blood ; and colonel Kirke, who was left in command at Bridgewater, when Feversham and Churchill returned to London, continued for some weeks the practice of every imaginable atrocity at the expense of the luckless inhabitants of the disloyal county. Kirk had for some years been governor of Tangier, and the savage inhumanity which he had learned among the barbarians of Africa, was now afforded its fullest exercise among his own countrymen. Even his barbarity, however, was thrown in the shade when, in September, sir George Jefferies began to hold the assizes in the devoted district. We will pass over the details of the horrid butchery committed by the most infamous judge who ever polluted the judicial ermine in this circuit, long known as the bloody assize. He boasted himself that he had hanged more traitors than all his predecessors together since the Conquest : to make up the number even a lady was put to death, for sheltering men who had fled from the battle, of which she had not even heard when she received them. Above 800 were hanged in the space of a month ; nearly 1000 more were transported as slaves to the West Indies ; the little girls who had embroidered Monmouth's banner were only rescued from his vengeance by the payment of a heavy fine to the queen's maids of honour ; who, as well as their mistresses, were allowed to make a lucrative traffic out of the sufferings or apprehensions of the convicted rebels ; Mary herself obtaining a grant of a hundred of those who had been sentenced to transportation, and selling them as slaves to the planters. When his bloody work was done Jefferies returned in triumph to London, where he was received by the king with the most exulting cordiality, and rewarded with a peerage and the office of lord chancellor of England.

In James's opinion he was so much strengthened by the disastrous issue of this rebellion, that he might venture to proceed more openly in his darling projects in favour of popery. When the parliament reassembled in November, he avowed that he had employed several officers who had not taken the tests required by law, and that he was resolved not to dismiss them ; and as, though they were willing

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to protect the officers alluded to from the penalties which they had already incurred, neither house was inclined to sanction their continuance in their employments, he prorogued them in great anger before they had sat a fortnight, though by doing so he lost a grant of 700,000*l.*, which the commons were preparing to grant him, in order to keep a small force of regular troops on foot till the militia could be remodelled.

Sunderland had secretly adopted the king's religion, and in consequence had now a predominant influence at court; and at his suggestion a secret council was established, consisting of seven members, afterwards reduced in practice to three; namely, the king, Sunderland himself, and father Petre, the queen's confessor, to concert measures for the promotion of the Roman Catholic religion: and the first step taken was designed to establish by judicial sentence the king's power to dispense with the religious tests enacted in the late reign. The bench of judges was carefully packed, all those being removed who were suspected of being adverse to the authority claimed by the king, and then a fictitious action was brought against a Roman Catholic officer, named Hales, for holding a commission without having qualified himself by taking the test. Hales pleaded a dispensation from the king, and the judges, by a majority of eleven to one, pronounced his plea valid; but this judicial confirmation of such an exercise of the prerogative only increased the popular discontent, as it clearly increased the difficulty of resisting the power thus put forth, and as it was plain that all the rights claimed by the people rested on the same foundation as the law which was thus dispensed with; and that if the king could dispense with one law, he could dispense with every law ever enacted. It was evident even to James's dull understanding and arbitrary disposition, that it would not be safe to provoke inquiry into the reality of the dispensing power by too frequent an exercise of it; so he began to canvass those who were likely to be members of a future parliament to consent to the repeal of the tests: to his disappointment he met with refusals even from the men, who, as he fancied, had the least sense of religion and the greatest desire for the favours of the court. He then thought that it might be easier, as a preliminary step, to convert some of them to his own religion, when their willingness to abolish the tests would follow as a matter of course; but he abandoned that design in consequence of a reply which he received from Kirke, to whom he addressed his arguments as to one not likely to be troubled with the scruples of too delicate a conscience, but who now excused himself from complying with the king's wishes on the ground that he had promised the emperor of Morocco, if he ever changed his religion, to turn Mahometan.

In Ireland, where lord Clarendon was lord-lieutenant, he had better fortune, though the violence of lord Tyrconnel, whom he had lately sent thither as general of the forces, had nearly driven the Irish into resistance ; but, in the mean time, the now undisguised objects of the king's policy began to awaken a feeling of opposition in the members of the Church of England also, who, though in theory admitting the doctrines of passive obedience in their fullest extent, in practice qualified those doctrines when they found that they could only be carried out at the expense of their religion ; accordingly James resolved to subdue the spirit of the Church of England, and erected a court not very unlike the Court of High Commission that existed fifty years before, with even greater powers than had been possessed by that obnoxious tribunal, as it had authority "to punish all who seemed to be suspected of offences." It was not difficult to find a victim for so comprehensive a definition ; a London clergyman, of the name of Sharp, had preached against popery, and a royal mandate was issued to Compton, the bishop of London, ordering him to suspend him. It was in vain that Compton replied that, till Sharp was condemned by a competent court, he had no power to suspend him ; and that he did, in fact, privately enjoin Sharp to desist from preaching. Compton was summoned to appear before the new ecclesiastical court, was himself suspended for disobedience to the royal mandate, and had his name struck out of the list of privy councillors. Halifax also was dismissed from his office ; and was followed not long after by Rochester, the king's brother-in-law, because he refused to change his religion at the king's request. Clarendon, James's other brother-in-law, was recalled from Ireland, and the whole power remained in the hands of Sunderland, who had lately completed a bargain with Louis to betray to him all the secrets of his master for a pension of between 5000*l.* and 6000*l.* a year. Tyrconnel, a man if possible more worthless still, had no longer any rival in Ireland ; and in Scotland the earl of Perth, the chancellor, who had secured the king's favour by becoming a convert to popery, pushed forward his designs with an open assumption of arbitrary power that could not as yet be ventured on in England. Without any law or resolution of the state to authorize such an injunction, he forbade the booksellers in Edinburgh to sell any book without his licence. One bookseller told the officers that he had one book which reflected on popery in very coarse terms, and asked whether he might sell it ; they required to see a copy, and he showed them the Bible. The chancellor proceeded to fit up a chapel for the celebration of the mass in his own house, the city rose in a formidable riot, the dragoons were called out, several people were killed, and, though James himself sent down orders to punish the rioters

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severely, and not to spare the torture, a formidable spirit of discontent spread all over the kingdom : the Scottish parliament refused to pass the measures which the king desired for the indulgence of the Roman Catholics ; it was prorogued, and James, by his own authority, dispensed with the laws against them, and admitted them into the council and other important offices.

In England it was determined to begin the attack on the Church by violating the privileges of the universities. The deanery of Christ Church, at Oxford, was conferred on a Roman Catholic ; still that office was in the gift of the crown. Shortly afterwards the presidency of Magdalen fell vacant, the election of which was vested in the fellows ; and as they refused to elect a president who was not qualified according to the statutes which they had sworn to observe, they were forcibly ejected from the college, and declared incapable of ever holding any Church preferment. At Cambridge, for refusing to make a Benedictine monk a master of arts, the vice-chancellor was summoned before the new high commission, deprived of his office, and of the emoluments of the mastership of his college. In both towns great indignation was manifested, which broke out in acts of open violence ; and James began to foresee that he might find, that in England also compliance with his orders could only be enforced by his dragoons ; but many of the troops were not well inclined to aid in the establishment of popery, and he had no means of compelling their obedience. At that time there was no mutiny act, and the military tribunals had no authority except during war. James determined to strike terror into the army by trying some deserters in the civil courts. The most eminent judges pronounced the idea illegal : they were dismissed. With some difficulty successors were found for them servile enough to commit even murder at the king's bidding ; and, when the obsequiousness of the bench was thus secured, several deserters were brought to trial, and executed by their sentence.

James had dismissed the earls of Clarendon and Rochester because they would not change their religion ; and, after trying in vain to induce his daughter, the princess Anne, to change hers, in which event he would probably have endeavoured to procure a settlement of the crown on her, in preference to her elder sister, the princess of Orange, he actually consented to a scheme of Tyrconnel's for separating Ireland from the British dominions after his own death, and for annexing it to France. However, before this iniquitous scheme could be proceeded with, it was announced that the queen was with child ; and thenceforth all the hopes of the court were fixed on her delivery, which the Roman Catholics prayed might, and confidently predicted would, bless the king with a male heir.

This event, however grateful to James, was not without its

embarrassments, rendering it, as it did, indispensable to summon a parliament to provide for a regency, if the expected child should prove a boy, and the king should die before he attained his majority. But a parliament would be certain to attack the king's recent actions, and to oppose his future designs, unless some means could be devised of acquiring an absolute control over the elections. If, by any means, a majority in the commons could be secured, James was prepared to take the most desperate measures to disarm the opposition of the lords, even if it should be necessary, as Sunderland threatened, to raise all the troopers of the life-guards to the peerage. To pack the house of commons was the difficulty. The lord-lieutenants of the different counties, and the sheriffs, though many of them had been designedly selected from the Roman Catholics, for the most part refused to become agents in the promotion of such an object. The Nonconformist party, still numerous, was disposed, from their horror of popery, to combine with the members of the Established Church; and every day showed that the more unscrupulously the government attempted to overbear opposition, the more universal and the more resolute would that opposition be.

Yet, in spite of these signs of the times, sufficient to appal the wisest and the boldest men, James proceeded to acts more notoriously illegal than ever. In April, 1687, he had issued, by his sole authority, a declaration of indulgence, abrogating all religious tests, and suspending all penal laws, against all classes of Nonconformists; at the end of April, 1688, he published a second declaration, similar to the first, with the addition that he would thenceforth employ no one who was not prepared to concur in all his designs; and, a few days afterwards, he issued an order in council, commanding this declaration to be read in all churches on two successive Sundays by the officiating ministers. The first Sunday appointed was the 20th of May, in London; the 3rd of June, in the country parishes. After long and anxious deliberation the London clergy resolved, in a body, that it was against their consciences to comply with the royal mandate. The bishops of the province of Canterbury were invited to Lambeth by archbishop Sancroft, to deliberate on the same matter. The notice given was unavoidably so short that only a few could arrive in time. Those who attended, seven in number, signed an address to the king, drawn up in respectful terms, but avowing that, as, by the repeated decisions of parliament, the sovereign had not power to dispense with the laws, they could not be parties to the publication of his majesty's declaration. James was furious, and reproached them bitterly when they attended to present their address. His anger was increased by the fact of the great majority of the clergy

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refusing to read his declaration, while those who consented for the most part saw their congregations quit the church on hearing the first words of it, and he summoned the bishops before the council. They acknowledged their signatures to the address, and then Jefferies, as chancellor, called upon them to give bail to answer a criminal information for having published a seditious libel. They refused to comply. No peer, as they truly said, could by law be required to give bail; and Jefferies, by the order of James, signed a warrant to commit them to the Tower.

They were sent to their prison by water: but the Thames was crowded with boats, the crews of which greeted them on their passage with acclamations and prayers for their safety. The soldiers who were appointed to guard them were actuated by the same feelings. The usual military toasts were laid aside, and no other health was drunk but theirs. The first nobles of the land flocked to the Tower to pay their respects to them, while the humbler classes thronged Tower Hill, catching with eagerness at every report of the health and conduct of those whose cause they identified with their own.

The queen's confinement had not been expected till July; but, on the 10th of June, two days after the committal of the bishops, she was safely delivered of a son, whom the universal belief at the time affirmed to be a supposititious child. There is not the slightest doubt that he was the genuine offspring of the queen; but, so singular was James's mismanagement of everything, that the steps taken to prove him so were precisely those which would have been adopted if an imposture had been intended. None of those most interested were present. The princess Anne was at Bath, not expecting the event to happen so early. Lord Clarendon, her uncle, was at hand, but he was not summoned; nor the archbishop, who might easily have been brought from the Tower; nor were any persons allowed to be present at the birth but Roman Catholics, or Protestants like Jefferies, justly more distrusted than any Roman Catholics.

The 29th of June was fixed for the trial of the bishops, and the whole nation, in a state of violent excitement, awaited the result. Even Sunderland and Jefferies were alarmed at the unmistakable signs of the public feeling, and would gladly have seen James seize the opportunity of the birth of the prince of Wales to drop all further proceedings; but his obstinacy increased daily. He continually declared that concessions had ruined his father, and that he himself had hitherto been too indulgent. Every possible precaution had been taken to pack both the jury and the judges, one of whom, in defiance of the law, was an avowed Roman Catholic; but, as all the ablest lawyers in the kingdom had been, one after another, dis-

missed from the service of the crown for giving opinions adverse to the king's designs, the advocates employed by the bishops were greatly superior to those who conducted the prosecution. The case had nearly broken down by the inability of the crown to prove the publication of the address; but, fortunately for the great interests of liberty, that difficulty was got over, and the question came to be decided on the broad ground whether a respectful address, of which every word was true, presented by peers of England to their sovereign, was "a false, malicious, and seditious libel," as the indictment termed it, such as could render its authors liable to prosecution; or whether, on the contrary, it only asserted what was undeniably true according to the established principles of the constitutional law of the kingdom, namely that the king had no power to dispense with the statutes of the realm; and whether subjects, if aggrieved, had a right to present such a petition. On this occasion the junior counsel of the bishops, a barrister of the name of Somers, first distinguished himself by the weighty arguments with which he disproved every word of the indictment. The judges differed in opinion. One, as has been said, was a Roman Catholic, from whom, in such a crisis, it was hardly reasonable to expect an impartial judgment. However, two of the four pronounced the address no libel. The jury deliberated all night, and in the morning pronounced a verdict of not guilty.

In the history of the world no judicial decision has produced such ecstatic delight. The whole assembly which filled Westminster Hall greeted it with one unanimous shout. That shout was caught up by the still greater multitude which thronged the avenues to the court. It was spread over the whole city, and when the news reached the regiments encamped at Hounslow, which James had that morning gone down to visit, the soldiers broke out into similar acclamations. James asked the cause of the uproar. "Nothing," replied the person addressed, "but that the bishops are acquitted." "Do you call that nothing?" said the baffled tyrant. "But so much the worse for them." At night the whole metropolis blazed with bonfires, the pope was burnt in effigy, and, as the news reached the principal cities of the kingdom, the enthusiastic joy exhibited in every one of them almost equalled the exultation of the Londoners.

The very same day seven of the greatest nobles, or most influential men in the kingdom, forwarded to the Hague an invitation which had been some weeks in preparation, entreating the prince of Orange to come to their assistance, promising at once to join him with every man they could raise, and assuring him that they only represented the feelings of a vast majority of the whole nation.

William received the invitation with pleasure, but also with a

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full sense of the difficulties which it laid him under. It was a fine thing to become king of England, but the power thus proffered to him (for however the inviters and the invited might disguise the fact to themselves, there was but little doubt that their success could only be purchased by the entire deposition of James) derived its chief value in his eyes from the means which it would afford him of further counteracting the ambition of Louis, the object of his unceasing enmity. In this view it was in the first place essential that he should not offend the other Roman Catholic powers of Europe, whose co-operation was necessary to the success of his other designs. A second difficulty was to obtain the consent of the United States of Holland, any one of which had the right of preventing his meditated expedition, and some of which, especially the richest and the most powerful of all, the state of Amsterdam, were eager partisans of the French alliance. The third difficulty was, since it was indispensable that he should be accompanied by an armed force, to avoid creating a feeling in the English that they had been subjugated by a foreign invader. From these perplexities he was extricated by the very men against whom he was proposing to act. Just at this juncture Louis disgusted the other Roman Catholic princes of Europe by picking a wanton quarrel with the pope, and alienated his friends in Holland, partly by the cruelties which he was inflicting on his Huguenot subjects, many of whom were naturalized Dutchmen, and partly by laying prohibitory duties on important articles of their trade; while James, whom the acquittal of the bishops had only excited to greater fury, after in vain trying to wreak his vengeance on all the clergy who had refused to read his declaration, and endeavouring with equal ill success, to obtain the unconditional co-operation of the army, sent over to Tyrconnel for bodies of Irish troops, by whose aid he proposed to coerce the English, whether civilians or soldiers; disregarding the fact, that the recollection of the Irish massacre had not yet died away, and that at that time there were no foreigners so much detested in England as the Irish.

William availed himself of the errors of his enemies with infinite skill. To the emperor he represented that persecutors like James and like Louis were the real foes of the Roman Catholic faith. The leaders of the French faction at home he courted with unceasing assiduity, addressing himself to their feelings both as Protestants and as merchants. And in the mean time, without divulging his plans to any one, he pressed on the preparations for his meditated expedition with the utmost vigour and promptness. D'Avaux, the French ambassador at the Hague, a man of great diplomatic skill, discovered the preparations and divined their object; but neither he nor his master could prevail on James to take

proper precautions against them. Sunderland, quick to discern the probable course of events, had begun to betray him to William, and now exerted all his abilities and all his influence to lull him into security, which he, best of all men, knew to have no foundation. At last William's preparations were completed, and then, when all was ready, he solicited the sanction of the States. It was formally given; and, on the 19th of October, he put to sea with a fleet which, including transports, amounted to nearly 500 sail, and with an army of about 14,000 men.

A few days earlier James had received, from the French ambassador at the Hague, news of what was about to happen, so certain that he could no longer refuse to believe them. He at once fitted out a fleet under the command of lord Dartmouth, raised fresh troops, and sent to Scotland and to Ireland for the English regiments in those countries, so that he reckoned that in a week or two he should have above 40,000 men under arms; and began also to seek to regain the good will of his people by conciliatory measures. He rescinded the suspension of the bishop of London; he issued a proclamation, promising to protect the Church of England; he replaced the different magistrates and officers whom he had lately dismissed, abolished the Court of High Commission, and restored the ejected fellows of Magdalen. He even condescended to summon an extraordinary meeting of the privy council, the peers, judges, and other persons of weight and influence, and to lay before them ample proofs that the infant prince was really the offspring of the queen. These concessions now came too late; they were attributed to fear alone; and he still refused to abandon the dispensing power, his claim to which had been the chief cause of his difficulties.

Before he set sail, William issued a temperate and statesman-like declaration of the causes and objects of his enterprise; setting forth the continued violations of the law by James, his open attacks on the established religion, his oppression of individuals, and his denial, even to the noblest of his subjects, of the right to petition for the removal of those grievances. He mentioned also the doubts entertained by the generality of the nation respecting the birth of the prince of Wales; he renounced all idea of conquest; and, finally, though he was preparing to introduce a foreign force into the island, he promised that they should all be withdrawn the moment that tranquillity was re-established by the unbiassed decisions of a free parliament.

A superstitious man might have thought he saw a bad omen for his ultimate success in a violent storm which attacked the fleet as soon as it was out of sight of land, and compelled it to put back in great disorder and distress. But the mind of William was not to

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be daunted by vain terrors: a very few days sufficed to repair damages, and he again set sail.

The whole fleet was under the command of admiral Herbert, an officer of reputation, who had lately joined him from England, and whose name had attracted many English sailors to the service; but the wind which was fair for William, who was proceeding to the western coast, prevented lord Dartmouth, the admiral of the king's fleet, from coming out of the Thames. On the 5th of November, already celebrated as the anniversary of one great deliverance of the kingdom from popery, William and his army landed safely in Torbay, and, without delay, began to march towards the metropolis. He was received with great joy by the citizens of Exeter. After a few days many leading country gentlemen and noblemen joined him, and he advanced towards Salisbury, where the king's army was assembling, and where James himself was preparing to place himself at its head. Meantime James's tone was as arrogant and unyielding as ever. He returned a haughty answer to a petition from many of the principal prelates and noblemen, praying him to call a free parliament; gave notice that he would receive no communication from the invaders, but would hang any messenger who should attempt to bring one: and his very last act before quitting London to join his army, was to appoint a council of five lords to manage affairs in his absence, of whom two were Roman Catholics, and a third was Jefferies. The infant prince of Wales was sent to Portsmouth, from which town it was expected that it would be easy to convey him out of the reach of danger, if it should appear advisable to do so.

In the northern counties, the news of William's landing was received with gladness. Lord Danby secured York, the earl of Devonshire collected a force at Derby and Nottingham, and the news of these events produced their natural effects on the two parties, now drawing near to each other with hostile feelings on the Wiltshire downs. But James, though eager to fight for his crown, was destined to find himself deprived of the power of fighting. The officer in whose skill he placed the greatest reliance was Churchill, who, in a great degree, owed his rise to James's favours, and who was now employed by him in an honourable and lucrative post. Churchill was believed to be fond of gain, and indifferent to religion; but, like many others, though not careful to obey its precepts, he clung to the ancient forms to which he had been accustomed, and shrunk from the idea of aiding a Roman Catholic to attack Protestantism. He now quitted the camp of the king, and repaired to William, who was well able to appreciate the value of such a recruit. But his own desertion was not the only blow which he inflicted on his late master. Lady

Churchill was the bosom friend of the princess Anne, and by her persuasion the princess also quitted Whitehall, and, as the royal army lay between her and her brother-in-law, took refuge with his partisans in the north, being escorted by her old tutor, Compton, the bishop of London, who had formerly been in the life-guards, and who now resumed his military habiliments for a while, to take command of the princess's escort, and conduct her to Nottingham. Her husband, prince George of Denmark, had quitted James's camp for that of William a day or two before. His loss was no particular cause of regret to James, for he had neither abilities nor influence; but the flight of Anne caused him, apparently, the severest pang that he had yet felt. "God help me," said he, when the news was broken to him; "my own children have forsaken me!"

He had returned to London and summoned the peers who were in the metropolis to aid him with their advice. Halifax was the chief spokesman; his counsel was to summon a parliament, and to open a negotiation with William; but, as a preliminary indispensable to the success of these measures, to dismiss all Roman Catholics from office, to separate himself from France, and to proclaim an amnesty to all those who had opposed or who were now opposing him. The amnesty was the point which James seemed most unwilling to concede; but at last he agreed to adopt all the measures proposed to him, and deputed Halifax with two colleagues to treat on his part with the prince of Orange. That same day he announced to the French ambassador that his acquiescence was a mere feint, having for its object the gaining of time to send his wife and infant son to France, and that, as soon as they were safe, he too should quit England and take refuge in Ireland, where the people would stand by him, or perhaps in Scotland or France.

To his dismay his plans were counteracted by an obstacle which he had never anticipated. Lord Dartmouth, on receiving orders to convey the young prince to France, positively refused to obey, pronouncing that it would be almost treason to place the heir to the throne in the power of Louis, and that it would hopelessly exasperate the nation, who evidently were sufficiently alienated already, for adherents were now flocking to William with daily increasing rapidity, till the nobles who surrounded him exceeded many times the number of the remnant who still formed the court at Whitehall.

On the 8th of December Halifax and his colleagues reached Hungerford, the town which William had appointed for receiving them. Their proposal was to refer every matter in dispute to the decision of a free parliament, to which William at once agreed. Other points of less importance were still under discussion, when

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James, having now gained time to mature his plans, committed his wife and son to the care of Lauzun, one of the most distinguished nobles of France, who, being in disgrace with Louis, had been for some time a resident in England. Lauzun discharged his trust with great address, and, on the 10th of December, the queen and her infant were safely landed on the French coast. At the same time that James received the news of their having begun their voyage prosperously, a despatch from Halifax reached him, giving him hopes of the favourable issue of the negotiations at Hungerford; but his purpose was too firmly fixed to be laid aside; and long before dawn on the 11th he quitted the palace, crossed the Thames, into which he threw the great seal of the kingdom, with the vain idea that its loss would prove a serious obstacle to the despatch of the necessary business of the state, and then getting into a carriage, drove with all speed to Sheerness, where a custom-house barge was awaiting his arrival.

Before he started he sent orders to Feversham to disband the army; and his obedience laid London at the mercy of a mob, who, instigated by some unknown prompters, or perhaps, merely by the opportunity of rapine and license unexpectedly afforded them, committed frightful disorders, burning numbers of houses, especially such as belonged to Roman Catholics, and pillaging the inhabitants, so that the metropolis bore the appearance of having been sacked by a victorious enemy; till the militia were got under arms, who at last restored tranquillity and confidence.

James, however, had not yet quitted the kingdom. Some fishermen had boarded the vessel in which he was preparing to flee, and, taking him for father Petre, had forced him back to the shore, and treated him with rudeness and violence, till his person was recognized. Returning to Rochester, he sent lord Feversham to William, with a letter proposing a conference, and advanced to London; but William refused a personal interview, and put Feversham under arrest for coming to his camp without a safe conduct.

In flying James had done the very thing most advantageous for the designs of William. Nothing could have been so unfavourable to those designs as the interruption of his flight, and his return to London. The prince's object now was to frighten him into repeating his attempt, yet without committing any act which could be said to have afforded grounds for alarm. James was perfectly aware that his enemies wished him to flee again, and yet he had not courage to disappoint them. William, who had reached Windsor a day or two before, convened the lords who were in his train to deliberate on the present crisis. Halifax, as usual, presided over their deliberations, and they all recommended that James should be requested to retire from London, where his presence

might cause disorders, to Ham House on the banks of the Thames. James preferred returning to Rochester, and from that city he made his escape secretly, embarked on board a small vessel, and on the 24th of December he landed safely in France. He was received by Louis with magnanimous hospitality. The palace of St. Germain's was assigned him for his residence, with an income of nearly 50,000*l.* a year; and no exertion was spared to prevent his being made sensible, as far as outward circumstances went, of the terrible fall he had thus experienced.

William was received in London with rejoicings surpassing even those which had greeted the restoration of Charles, and proceeded with all speed to re-establish order. He summoned the peers to meet, and issued a similar invitation to all those who had sat in any house of commons in the time of Charles II., requesting them, when they met, to decide on the proper steps to be taken in the present state of the country. Both assemblies agreed in requesting him to issue circular letters, in the place of the usual writs, to all the constituencies of the kingdom, inviting them to send representatives to a parliament, and in entreating him also to assume in the mean time the provisional administration of the government. Shortly afterwards the Scottish estates adopted similar resolutions, and William at once complied with their requests.

On the 22nd of January the English parliament met. Various schemes were proposed for the future government of the kingdom. Some wished to declare the throne vacant by James's abdication, as involved in his flight from the kingdom; others desired to avoid any such express declaration, but proposed to act on the understanding implied in it. However, the resolution declaring the throne vacant was passed. The next question was, how the vacancy should be filled up. Some proposed a regency. William announced that, though he would accept the crown if offered to him, he would not accept the regency. Others insisted that the princess Mary had a right to succeed to her father, but were willing that she should give the prince, her husband, whatever share of the government she chose. It was found that this pleased neither prince nor princess. Dr. Burnet, who had long enjoyed Mary's entire confidence, declared that her ideas of the submission of a wife were such, that she had often assured him of her determination, if she came to the English throne in the natural way, at once to surrender her power into the hands of her husband; while William avowed that he would never be tied to his wife's apron-strings, nor accept from her a subordinate and precarious place in the government. At last it was decided that the prince and princess should reign jointly, both enjoying equal dignity, but that the administration of the government should be vested in him alone.

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On their decease the crown was settled first on the posterity of Mary, then on that of the princess Anne, and, after them, on that of William. To the instrument that conferred the sovereignty on them was appended a Declaration of Right, carefully drawn up by a committee of the commons, embodying the chief principles of the constitution, as the laws which the new rulers were bound to observe.

The very day that these resolutions were finally passed, the princess Mary landed at Greenwich, and proceeded to Whitehall. On the next day, the 13th of February, the two houses, with Halifax, the speaker of the lords, and Powle, member for Cirencester, the speaker of the commons, at their head, repaired to Whitehall, where they were received by William and Mary, standing under a canopy of state, erected for the occasion. Halifax, in the name of the whole people of England, entreated them to accept the crown. William, in his own name and that of the princess, in a few gracious words declared their acceptance of the noble trust committed to them. The heralds in front of the palace proclaimed William and Mary king and queen of England, amid the beating of drums, the clang of trumpets, and the acclamations of the vast multitude, which reached further than the eye could see, and the reign of James II. was terminated.

The deposition of James was the act of almost the whole nation; and no greater condemnation of a sovereign can be pronounced than the mere statement of such a fact. It was not yet thirty years since the people had been thrown into a perfect delirium of loyalty by the return of himself and his brother. It was only four years since he had ascended the throne, strengthened by the failure of the attempts of his enemies to exclude him from it, and with every opportunity of becoming the powerful sovereign of a willing people, if he had only adhered to the promises contained in his first speech to his council. In that brief period, by an unbroken course of tyranny, cruelty, bigotry, and faithlessness, he united the whole nation in a resolution to get rid of him, even at the price of violating what many of them had previously conceived to be the fundamental maxims not only of policy, but also of religion. His sole virtue was courage, his sole talent some degree of aptitude for business, and a respectable skill in seamanship; but his faults, such as have been described in the preceding pages, would have outweighed far greater qualifications for the exercise of authority.

Yet even his faults and errors have proved beneficial to his country. Had he been possessed of but a slight degree of prudence or of honesty, the revolution would not have taken place, and some such revolution as has been recorded was necessary for the secure establishment of the liberties of the people. The restoration

might have afforded opportunities for the establishment of those liberties on a proper footing, but the people were then too joyful to be inclined to reason with justice or to act with foresight; the opportunity was neglected, and the whole conduct of Charles II. and of James showed plainly that their ideas of the right of kings to absolute power came little short of those which had produced the fatal mistakes of their father. Those ideas had now received their deathblow; the revolution had decided in language that could never hereafter be misunderstood, that kings derived their power from the people, and were bound to exercise it for the good of the people. The practical denial of this constitutional principle had led to the deposition of an hereditary king, to the disinheriting of his unoffending heir, and to the banishment of all his family who could be supposed to be partakers of his sentiments. Many such violations of the line of succession, by creating a general feeling of the insecurity of government, would be fatal to the tranquillity, and, therefore, to the prosperity of the country. One such break, by placing both the authority of the crown and the liberties of the people on a solid, because on the only true foundation, has secured both tranquillity and prosperity to the English nation, such as no other people has ever enjoyed.

Times of revolution are favourable to the progress of human intellect; and it is therefore not surprising that the latter half of the seventeenth century produced some of our greatest writers in every branch of learning and literature. It was the age of Milton and Dryden, the greatest of our poets, great masters also of prose, though the pre-eminence of their poetical genius has almost buried their other works in oblivion, and of Butler, the author of *Hudibras*, a work not only delightful for its original and ceaseless wit, but especially valuable as affording one of the truest pictures of the feelings of his age. It was the age of Jeremy Taylor, of Barrow, of Stillingfleet, and of Tillotson, preachers who have no superiors, and scarcely any equals, and of Bunyan, who still preaches to the existing generation, not indeed in argumentative sermons or learned expositions, but in the exquisite allegory of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, which, though long undervalued, has won its way to universal admiration, and has now an honoured place equally in the nursery of the child and in the library of the maturer scholar. In history it produced Clarendon, whose great work has been already mentioned, and Burnet, whose reputation, at a distance of a century and a half from his death, is daily rising as to the general accuracy of his narrative. In Charles's reign Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, and Newton began to remove the veil from the sublimest mysteries of nature. Others there were of high genius, but their writings are, for the most part, so deformed with

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indecenty, even beyond the general grossness of the age, that their names do not deserve to be recorded. It is a stain which pollutes many of the works of even the great Dryden. The improvement of the nation at large in virtue and morality, stoutly asserted by some persons, is as positively denied by others; but it is quite certain, and it may be asserted with a thankful pride, that there is no society now to be found which would overlook such disgraceful blemishes in even the brightest genius, or would tolerate for a moment the licentiousness of style and of language which so many of the writers in the reign of Charles adopted as the surest and speediest road to universal popularity.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

• WILLIAM AND MARY.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	A.D.	<i>Spain.</i>	A.D.	<i>Popes.</i>	A.D.
Leopold.		Charles II.		Innocent XI.	
<i>France.</i>		Philip V.	1700	Alexander VIII. . .	1689
Louis XIV.		<i>Sweden.</i>		Innocent XII. . . .	1691
		Charles XII.	1697	Clement XI.	1700

1689.



HE task which William imposed upon himself by thus accepting the sovereignty was not without difficulty; for a revolution, even when conducted so peacefully as that which had recently taken place, could not fail to have unsettled the minds of men; the whole fabric of government had been shaken, and was to be re-established on a foundation wholly new; reverence for, and confidence in, the laws, which had been greatly impaired by the notorious corruption of the judges during the last ten years, was to be restored; what was harder still, the animosities of faction were to be appeased, and every care was to be taken to prevent the recent changes from appearing to be the result of the triumph of one party over the other. The successful attainment of those ends required great tact and address, and, if William in some degree failed in the prosecution of them, his failure must, in part, be ascribed to the real difficulties of his situation; in part, however, it must be acknowledged that he increased those difficulties by his own conduct. He was naturally reserved even when in his own country, but in England he became morose and

sullen ; while the preference for foreigners, which he incessantly exhibited, to the prejudice of his new subjects, naturally alienated from him the good will of many, who, if he had let them, would have been disposed to think of nothing but of the great benefits which he had conferred upon the country.

His first steps showed an inclination to distribute his favours equally between the two parties which divided the kingdom. The white staff of the treasurer, he made a rule, which since his time has generally been observed, of never entrusting to a single individual. It was put into commission : the first commissioner, or, as we should now call him, the first lord, though that office was not then considered the highest place in the ministry, was lord Mordaunt, better known by his later title of lord Peterborough ; but the officer on whom the real weight of affairs devolved was lord Godolphin, whose talents for business, imperturbable temper, and invariable tact (which caused Charles II. to say of him that he was never either in the way or out of the way) were rapidly raising him to distinction. The privy seal, Halifax, and one secretary of state, the earl, afterwards duke of Shrewsbury, were Whigs ; Danby, afterwards successively marquis of Caermarthen and duke of Leeds, the president of the council, and lord Nottingham, the other secretary, were Tories. They were all able men ; but, unfortunately, the two ablest, Halifax and Danby, bore each other a personal antipathy ; and Shrewsbury had not the nerve requisite for so prominent a position in so trying a time, nor firmness sufficient to resist the influence of his mother, a woman notorious for pre-eminent infamy, even in the dissolute court of Charles, who soon induced him to listen to the overtures of James. At a later period he redeemed his character by the promptitude and resolution with which, at the critical moment of the death of Anne, he contributed, more perhaps than any man in the kingdom, to the establishment of the house of Hanover on the throne.

But, able as they all were, and placed, as they ostensibly were, in the highest positions in the kingdom, they soon found that they enjoyed but a limited degree of the royal confidence, when compared with the foreigners whom William had brought with him from Holland. On them were bestowed the most lucrative offices, and those which brought the holders most immediately in contact with the king's person. He even paraded his preference of them in the most ostentatious manner ; dining in public with them as the companions of his table, while his English subjects of the very highest rank stood unnoticed behind his chair. The impolicy of such conduct was as glaring as its impropriety. It is true that, on one side, he was himself a foreigner ; but, on the other, he was an Englishman, and an English prince ; and his British subjects, who,

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by the position in which they had placed him, showed that they chiefly remembered his British blood, should never have been driven, in their own despite, to recollect that he was also a foreigner. It was no wonder that he speedily became unpopular. He was also in very bad health, and those who saw him presaged for him no long continuance in this world; some even believed that, if his disease failed to kill him, the papists would certainly contrive to assassinate him.

That James would make a strenuous effort to recover his throne was undoubted; and no one looked upon the success of such an enterprise as desperate. All, even the ministers, agreed that it depended on himself; Halifax said that, if he were a Protestant, he could not be kept out four months, while Danby thought that the people would even be satisfied if he only gave them security for their own religion. Fortunately for William, and for England, James was his own worst enemy. Full of ideas of his own abstract and indefeasible rights, he would not stoop to conciliate even those leaders of the nation whose support and co-operation were indispensable to his success. Many memorials are extant which he from time to time presented to Louis to urge him to take steps for his restoration; in every one of which he falls into the gross error of supposing that that restoration was to be the consequence of William's unpopularity, and not of any regard or esteem that might be felt for himself; in fact, any attempt to be popular he thought beneath his dignity. So self-blinded was he, that, in one document, he actually mentions, as a personal grievance, and as a slur upon the energy and honesty of the nation, that people are now so much at their ease that there are not many "who will risk their fortunes and their lives to restore him," forgetting how many, while he was actually king, risked both to get rid of him.

Besides the uncertainty of affairs in England, it was generally thought very questionable what part Scotland would take, while the feeling of Ireland was more doubtful still. The native Irish were a vast majority of the population, and were all Roman Catholics; while the property of the island belonged almost wholly to the English settlers, who were Protestants. The seeds of disorder, therefore, were always present, even in the most tranquil times; yet the state of Ireland was for a while neglected, because William relied on the assurances of Tyrconnel that he should be able easily to induce that kingdom peaceably to follow the lead of England. Even had Tyrconnel been sincere, he promised what he had no ability to perform; for his violent and profligate administration had so alarmed the English, and had so excited the Irish party against them, that it was impossible to suppose that they would both agree together, and more especially that they would both agree to be

guided by Tyrconnel; but, in fact, sincerity was at all times the last virtue to be found in him: at the very time that he was sending these assurances to William, he was despatching other messages to St. Germain, to beg James to come over at once with a French force, and to tempt Louis to lend him an army by an offer to annex the whole island to France. As soon as his messengers had set sail for France, he called the native Irish to arms, and excited them to anticipate the arrival of James by the plunder and slaughter of the Protestants. From slaughter most of them escaped by fleeing to England, or by throwing themselves into those towns, such as Enniskillen or Londonderry, the slender defences of which, though no one would then have expected them to repel an army, were still sufficient to protect them against a mob. But though they preserved their lives, they could not save their property. Houses were ransacked, plate was stolen, furniture was burnt; the flocks and herds, then the chief wealth of the country, were slaughtered, at first for food, then for their skins, and at last out of pure mischief and a love of destruction. Immense as the sum seems, the value of the property destroyed within a few weeks was estimated at five millions of money.

James decided on adopting Tyrconnel's advice, and crossed over to Ireland at the head of 2500 English and Irish troops, under the command of Rosen, a French marshal, and accompanied also by a number of French officers. Louis had offered him the aid of a large French force, which James, with better judgment than he often displayed, declined, preferring to trust to the support of his countrymen alone; but he accepted a large present of money, arms, and ammunition, and on the 12th of March he landed at Kinsale, and proceeded to Dublin. He found war already raging: Tyrconnel had recruited his army till it amounted to near 40,000 men; but the Protestants had endeavoured to make a stand in Ulster, and a pitched battle had taken place at Dromore, in which they had been wholly defeated. He found also two parties in the Irish council: the English Jacobites, who wished to secure his authority in Ireland, as a means for recovering him his authority in England; and the native Irish, who desired to get rid of the English connexion altogether, and who, if unable to render Ireland an independent kingdom, would have preferred submitting to French dominion, of which they had no experience, rather than to English rule, against which they had been in constant rebellion for 500 years, and which the cruelties of Cromwell, within the memory of the elders of the existing generation, had made more odious than ever.

After some vacillation, caused by the conflicting advice of the contending parties, and by the letters of Graham of Claverhouse, now lord Dundee, who pressed him to cross over to Scotland,

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where William had scarcely any troops, and where the great mass of the Highland population was ready to rise in his favour, James set out in person to besiege Londonderry, into which the principal forces of the Protestants had thrown themselves. The governor, Lundy, was terrified at the thoughts of resistance to the superior numbers of the besiegers. He was deposed from his office, and the resolute defenders of the town selected as their commander an aged parson, named George Walker, who proved the most judicious choice that they could have made. He was aided by the military councils of major Baker. The two colleagues formed the men capable of bearing arms into a kind of garrison; they manned the walls, while the women brought them food and ammunition. The walls, however, were almost destitute of artillery, and were too low to afford them much protection against the fire of the besiegers; but, when breaches had been made, the storming parties were hurled back by the stubborn valour of the citizens. Fire and assault, however, were trifling evils, when compared with the famine which soon began to thin their ranks; but their noble resistance awakened the sympathy of the English parliament, where all parties united in pressing forward measures for their relief. The siege had commenced early in April, and by the middle of May, reinforcements, and vessels laden with provisions, were sent from England. Unluckily William placed the whole under command of Kirke; and he, slow and timid when no deed of atrocity was to be executed, was nearly a month on his passage. When he arrived, he was afraid to approach either the besiegers or the besieged; but, with a cruelty almost beyond that with which he had flooded the towns of Somersetshire with blood, he tantalized the famishing inhabitants of Londonderry with the sight of his vessels laden with food, which he made no attempt to place within their reach. At length, on the 20th of July, positive orders reached him to force his way, at all hazards, into the town. Some way below the town, the besiegers had thrown a boom across the Foyle; it yielded to the charge of the heavily-laden vessels. Ship after ship passed on to the quay, greeted by the acclamations of men, who were now, almost beyond their hopes, saved from death, and from sufferings worse than death. The besieging army retired from the walls, which, for a hundred and five days, they had so fruitlessly threatened, and the north of Ireland was saved.

James himself had long since returned to Dublin, where, at the beginning of May, he opened the parliament; but he had better have remained at Derry to share the disgrace of his defeated army, than have given his assent to the insane laws which the fury of the Irish party forced upon him. By one bill the act of settlement was repealed; by another the tithe was transferred from the

Protestants to the Roman Catholics; a third attainted nearly 3000 of the principal inhabitants of the kingdom. It was productive of even greater distress, that, to replenish the exchequer, he abused his prerogative by an extensive issue of bad money. All the brass that could be collected was coined at the Mint; the worthless counters received the names of the current coins, and every one who had any thing to sell was compelled to take them as such; that is to say, to part with his property for a sixtieth part of its value. Long after the act of attainder had ceased to spread alarm, or the tithe act to cause confiscation, the recollection of the misery produced by this coinage remained deeply impressed on the Irish mind; and the Orangeman, who, in this century, drank the health of William, amid the enumeration of warming-pans, wooden shoes, and other abominations, placed the brass money as the most practically grievous of the evils from which his country had been freed by the victory of William.

It was impossible that these measures should fail to alienate many persons in England from the side of James. They frightened even the Roman Catholics, and made numbers renounce his cause for ever. The same day that the boom across the Foyle was broken, the adherents of James sustained a defeat at Newton-butler. At the same time a force, consisting chiefly of French refugees, under marshal Schomberg, and of Dutch troops, under count Solmes, a favourite of William, but an incapable and worthless man, was sent to Ireland. James's affairs were becoming desperate, and the French envoy, who accompanied him, D'Avaux, proposed to him a plan, which he rejected with horror, and which Louis afterwards disapproved as impolitic, from the spirit of retaliation which it might arouse. It was no less than to cause a simultaneous massacre of all the Protestants in Ireland. He preferred to trust to an army raised by Tyrconnel, and to prepare to do battle for his crown with arms more becoming a sovereign than those employed by the unhappy Charles IX.

Town after town fell before Schomberg; but, as his force was inferior in number to that of the enemy, and very imperfect in discipline, he avoided anything like a pitched battle, and, by a skilful choice of positions, maintained his ground during the whole winter, in spite of great losses from disease, caused by want of proper supplies and shelter, and in spite of great discontent in the army, because of their sufferings, and in England, because of his apparent inactivity.

Naval affairs did not go on so well. Admiral Herbert proved quite unequal to his reputation. In May, 1689, in an encounter on the Irish coast, near Bantry Bay, he had been beaten off by the French fleet, who landed a small reinforcement of troops, and a

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large supply of money and provisions, for the use of James, and returned in safety ; but, as he sent home a boastful despatch, dwelling on the superior numbers of the enemy, William, who was partial to him, created him earl of Torrington, and continued him in the command. The next summer he was so strongly reinforced both from home and from Holland, as to find himself at the head of a fleet of nearly sixty ships ; but Louis, who had certain intelligence of an extensive conspiracy having been formed in England and Scotland to restore James, sent M. de Tourville, one of the most skilful sailors who has ever distinguished the French navy, with a fleet numerically superior, to give the conspirators countenance and support, by assuming a formidable station in the Channel. Torrington retreated before him till he received positive orders from the council to fight ; then he made a momentary stand off Beachy Head, placing the Dutch ships in the van, some of which, suffered severely, and then, with a loss of six Dutch and one English ship, he retreated into the Thames, taking up the buoys as he proceeded, that it might be impossible to pursue him. The alarm in London and the rest of the kingdom was great, and was increased by the news of a victory gained about the same time by the French over the Dutch at Fleurus, which made many people apprehend an invasion of England by the victorious army ; and these terrors were augmented by the absence of William, who, three weeks before, had set out for Ireland, where he arrived on the 14th of June, and landing at Carrickfergus, assumed the command of the army, which now amounted to about 30,000 men. James lay between him and Dublin with a somewhat smaller force ; but the southern bank of the Boyne afforded him a position strong enough, in resolute hands, to counterbalance a still greater disparity of numbers ; so strong, in fact, that Schomberg doubted the propriety of assailing it ; but William, afraid that James might retreat, and so escape him, resolved on the attack, and early on the 1st of July began to force the passage of the river. The day before, while reconnoitring the enemy, he was wounded in the shoulder by a cannon-ball, which, however, did not prevent him from bearing his share in the battle, in which he displayed the greatest personal courage ; while James, who in former days, had also displayed the most fearless bravery in the naval battles against the Dutch, now exhibited such a want of it as greatly contributed to his defeat. William's victory was complete. James, even before the conflict was over, quitted the field, and, breaking down the bridges over the different rivers as he passed, hastened to the coast, and embarked for France, where he arrived in little more than a week after the battle in high spirits, recounting the tale of his defeat and disgrace to every one whom he met. The politeness with which the French nobles listened to him

could not blind the acuteness of their perception of his character, or stifle the derisive accents with which they whispered to each other that they had only to hear James tell his own story to know why he was at St. Germain's and his son-in-law at St. James's. Those whom he left behind him, in spite of their loyalty, had not a much better opinion of him. He had been ungrateful enough to attribute his defeat to the inferiority of an Irish to an English army; but his officers said more truly that it had been caused by his own misconduct, and that, if the English would only change kings with them, they would gladly fight the battle over again.

Still the war in Ireland was not over. Sarsfield, the best officer in James's service, had secured Galway and Sligo in the preceding winter. Cork and Kinsale too still adhered to James, and threatened a stubborn resistance; but Churchill, who had lately been made earl of Marlborough, was sent from England with a small force to reduce them, a task which he executed with extraordinary despatch; and Limerick was now the only place of importance in Ireland which acknowledged James. Limerick was hardly more defensible than Londonderry had appeared to be; and the French commander, Lauzun, declaring that its walls might be battered down with rotten apples, declined risking his reputation and the lives of his soldiers in so hopeless an undertaking as an attempt to save it, and retired to France. Sarsfield alone upheld the drooping spirits of the citizens, and showed that courage, genius, and virtue were not the exclusive attributes of either party. William came in person against the last stronghold of his enemies; but he had outmarched his artillery; before it could join him, Sarsfield, by a brilliant march, surprised and destroyed it. Deprived of all means of battering the town, the king was compelled to try the effect of an assault. The storming party easily forced their way into the town, but were overwhelmed in the streets. Sarsfield's soldiers, when recovered from their first panic, fought furiously. Every citizen joined in the struggle with whatever arms he could procure; the women threw large stones and bottles from the windows; mines blew up the foremost of the assailants; and, as, though it was only the end of August, the rainy season was beginning to set in, William, fearing that the state of the roads might not only prevent his supplies from reaching him, but might render his retreat at a later period difficult, raised the siege, and returned to England, leaving Ginkell, a Dutch officer of considerable reputation, as commander-in-chief. The war languished during the winter. In the spring of 1691, a fresh general, St. Ruth, arrived to take the command, since Sarsfield's abilities were limited to the field of battle; but he was killed in a battle at Aghrim, which, though unimportant in itself, decided the fate of the northern and western districts, and made it

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hopeless even for Sarsfield to defend Limerick any longer. On the 3rd of October he signed the capitulation. Those who wished to do so were allowed to retire in safety with him to France; those who preferred to remain behind were ensured equal security, and were gladly enlisted into William's army.

In Scotland the war was of shorter duration; and, if it had not been for the violence of the Whig party, it is possible that it might have been altogether prevented. The change brought about in that kingdom by the revolution was far more violent than in England, because while those who promoted it in England sought only to establish the laws on which James had trampled, in Scotland the object aimed at was to get rid of the laws altogether. Religious zeal, which had always been more furious there than in any country in Europe, was now more furious than ever. Episcopacy, unpopular at all times, had been rendered additionally distasteful to the people by the severities with which Lauderdale and his colleagues had endeavoured to force it on them. William summoned a convention to meet at Edinburgh; and, by his own authority, dispensed with the oath which would have deprived those who adhered to the covenant of their rights as electors. The Covenanters, now dominant, showed that in suffering persecution they had not learned mercy, and treated the episcopal clergy with more deliberate cruelty than they themselves had ever experienced; attacked the churches on the Sunday, and, to use the current expression of the time, rabbled both minister and congregation. To establish peace between the two factions was impossible, and it was not easy to decide which was the best entitled to the preference. William would have preferred preserving episcopacy, while securing toleration to the Presbyterians; but he referred the matter to the decision of the convention. His chief adviser was sir John Dalrymple, more commonly known as the master of Stair, eloquent and able, but the most unscrupulous of men. The heads of the party who preserved their attachment to James were lord Balcarras and lord Dundee. It soon appeared that the supporters of the revolution greatly predominated in the convention. The duke of Hamilton was chosen president. The city of Edinburgh declared for William, but the duke of Gordon held the castle for James. Dundee had been assured by William himself that he should be unmolested if he remained quiet, even without owning the government; and he was at this time so mortified at the neglect with which Balcarras and himself were treated by James, that he would very probably have acquiesced in the decision of the majority, if he had not been treated still worse by the convention than by James. He received certain intelligence of a plot having been laid to assassinate him; and he applied to Hamilton for protection;

Hamilton put him off, referring him to the convention, and they treated his representations with indifference. To save his life he retired with a few guards to his country seat; when there, he renewed his assurance to the convention that he would not oppose the new government, and offered to return to the capital; and even to give legal bail for his peaceable conduct, if they would secure him from assassination. Unluckily, at the same time, a messenger was seized bearing letters addressed to him by James; Hamilton, with signal defiance of law and common sense, treated the existence of these letters, of which he was manifestly ignorant, as a crime on the part of Dundee, and issued warrants to apprehend him; Dundee, in self-defence, fled, raised the standard of war, and there was not a man alive so well able to render such a war formidable. The Highlanders were always difficult to manage as soldiers; they had no idea of the restraints of military discipline, nor of remaining under arms longer than they chose. Victory and defeat were equally fatal to their organization. After the one, they dispersed for the sake of safety; after the other, they returned home to secure their booty. They are often spoken of as inclined to one side or the other in politics; but, in fact, they followed their chiefs blindly, and their chiefs were divided by every sort of dissension and mutual jealousy.

At this moment, as at all times since the death of Montrose, Argyll was the great object of terror to the minor chieftains. The earl himself, whose father had been executed in James's time, naturally attached himself to William; and those who feared his power, or were in his debt, (and one class or the other comprehended nearly every chieftain in the Highlands,) as a matter of course took the other side. At the summons of Dundee clan after clan flocked to his standard, but he was too experienced a soldier to be willing to trust much to an army which knew but little of military discipline, and which would submit to even less than it knew. He sent to James and begged earnestly for a reinforcement of regular troops. It was promised; week after week passed by before he was joined by 300 or 400 Irish infantry, not superior in discipline or appointments, and far inferior in every other respect, to the least valuable of the Highlanders. If any one thing could have made them more useless than another, it was the character of their commander, Cannon, a man with neither energy nor ability. William's blunder was almost equal to James's. To oppose the fiery genius of Dundee he sent Mackay, a brave and honest man, but imbued with the narrowest ideas of discipline and routine, and destitute of even a single spark of that genius which knows when it is better to dispense with rules than to observe them. On the 27th of July, 1689, the two armies met at Killiecrankie; Dundee was inferior in

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numbers, but he was obliged to fight without delay, because his men were already beginning to return home to provide fuel for the winter. It was seven in the evening when the Highlanders dropped their plaids and charged the English bayonets with their broad-swords; though there was hardly an hour of daylight left, it was as much as was required: indeed the battle was over at the first charge. Mackay's men were fatigued by a long march; and, being surprised at an attack so late in the day, they fled at once. Mackay himself did all that could be done to prevent the defeat from becoming a rout; but would not have succeeded had not Dundee himself fallen in the hour of victory. His death more than counter-balanced all the loss of the other side; with him all James's hopes in this island perished irretrievably, and by his fall all William's anxieties and fears, as he himself pronounced, were at once terminated.

In the pocket of the dead warrior was found a letter from James, which would alone have ruined his cause, for it announced that a declaration of indemnity, which he was preparing to publish, was couched in such terms that he could break through it whenever he pleased. But, in fact, it was already ruined in the convention, as he had previously sent a formal message to that body full of threats of the greatest severity against all who did not at once return to their allegiance, and signed by Melfort as secretary of state, who, besides being personally odious to both parties, was by law incapable, as being a Roman Catholic, of holding such an office. The Scottish estates, undeterred by his menaces, conferred the crown on William and Mary: and adopted an instrument which they termed "a claim of rights," to be presented to the new sovereigns, and accepted by them at the same time with the government, in which the most important article was one by which they abolished episcopacy; and the coronation oath, which the commissioners were to administer to the sovereigns, was framed in accordance with that provision.

CHAPTER XLIX.

WILLIAM AND MARY (CONTINUED).

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E must return to England, where matters did not proceed so rapidly. The measures which first occupied the English parliament (after the confirmation of the Declaration of Right by a formal enactment, known to succeeding generations as the Bill of Rights, with the addition of a clause, excluding all Papists, and those who should marry Papists, from the throne) had, almost of necessity, related to the Church. The High Churchmen, though not disposed to give up the test act, which excluded Dissenters from civil employments, were willing to enlarge the entrance to the Church by some relaxation of its discipline; and Nottingham, who, of all statesmen, had the greatest weight with them, introduced a toleration bill, drawn up with great care, so as to be acceptable to the more moderate Dissenters of every denomination, which passed with the almost unanimous assent of both houses. A second bill, called a comprehension bill, which would almost have abolished dissent by removing all moderately reasonable grounds for it, met with less success. It was supported by Compton; but it was opposed not merely by the High Church party, who were adverse to all concession, and by the ardent Dissenters, whom no concession could conciliate; but, though more secretly, by even the dissenting ministers of moderate opinions, who would have been comprehended by it, but from whom, in comprehending them, it threatened to take away their occupation, by rendering the difference between them and the clergy of the Established Church almost imperceptible.

At the same time the question was raised as to those who were to be required to take the new oaths of supremacy and allegiance. It was certain that many of the clergy would refuse them, and it was therefore proposed not to require them of the present holders of any academical or ecclesiastical dignity. William himself, who, when taking the Scotch coronation oath, had stipulated that the strong language in which it was drawn should not bind him to be a persecutor, would have been willing to compromise the matter, and to consent to this proposal, if the High Church party would have consented to a repeal of the test act; but his impatience of advice, and his unwillingness ever to appear to take it, defeated

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this plan ; for he introduced it into his speech to parliament, without even having given any one of his ministers the least idea of his intention. It was a measure that, in any case, would have required great address to carry, but which, when proposed abruptly in this manner, was sure to be defeated. Neither the high nor even the low church party would abandon the test act ; and, in consequence, all the clergy were required at once to take the oath of allegiance on pain of deprivation ; and great numbers of them were ejected from their benefices in consequence of their refusal.

Before the parliament separated justice was done to those individuals who had been especially wronged by the arbitrary measures of late years. The attainders of lady Lisle, of lord Russell, and of Sidney, were reversed. Some, who were alive, were recompensed for the hardships which had been inflicted upon them ; and among them, Titus Oates, the sentence upon whom had been pronounced by the judges to be illegal, though no one thought it unjust, not only had his sentence reversed, but was treated with singular favour. His crimes were notorious and unparalleled. There was no doubt that, by a series of wanton perjuries, he had caused the deaths of many innocent and virtuous persons ; but there was also no doubt that a sentence of perpetual imprisonment was not warranted by law. It was certainly quite sufficient to restore him to liberty, especially as he had hardly yet suffered a longer imprisonment than that to which he might legally have been sentenced ; but the commons, espousing his cause with undue eagerness because it had nearly involved them in a quarrel with the lords, also petitioned the crown to grant him a pension, with which petition William most improperly and most unwisely complied, and not only conferred a large pension on that foulest of all criminals, but, as it has been asserted, rewarded his perjuries further with preferment in the Church.

The king was harassed also with private disputes, for which he was himself mainly to blame. In order to obtain the consent of the princess Anne to the settlement of the crown upon him in preference to her, a very ample provision had been promised her ; but no care had since been taken to carry those promises into execution. The princess was indignant, and, acting under the advice of lady Marlborough, an able but artful and intriguing woman, allowed the subject to be brought before the house of commons, who voted her an ample revenue for life. This inevitably caused some coolness between the two sisters, the queen and the princess ; and William, to prevent the resolution of the commons from being carried out, prorogued the parliament.

When it met again in November Halifax resigned the speakership of the lords, and, as this was looked upon as a symptom of the

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declining power of the Whigs, the Tories again brought forward the indemnity bill, which had been laid aside the preceding session, but it was thrown out by the Whigs; nor was it till the spring of the subsequent year that William was able to carry out his wise and humane purpose of leaving no one the plea of fear for opposing his government, which he effected at last by an act of grace, which had the further advantage, in point of policy, of proceeding more immediately from himself. At this moment, so indignant was he at the unreasonableness of both parties, and at their mutual suspicion of himself (for which, however, his neglect of any attempt to conciliate either was in a great degree to blame), that he actually meditated returning to Holland, and leaving Mary to conduct the English government; but he was persuaded by all his ministers to abandon that idea, and he substituted for it the plan of going to Ireland, and taking the management of the war there upon himself. The result of this wiser determination we have already seen. He had reason to suspect that, if the house of commons divined his intention, they would remonstrate against it; and, without communicating his purpose to any one but lord Caermarthen, he suddenly dissolved the parliament. At the same time he dismissed lord Halifax and lord Godolphin from their offices, and the duke of Shrewsbury resigned from sympathy with them.

Caermarthen was now the only minister whom William trusted. He had learnt from Clifford, in the time of Charles II., that the easiest way to secure votes in parliament was to buy them, and that the members were mostly willing to be bought; and he now established a regular market in which every one, who set no other value on his vote, might sell it to the minister. William (against his inclination, if we may trust Burnet) gave his sanction to the practice; and, for the next three-quarters of a century, the secret service money in reality decided the greater number of votes given by the house of commons.

The first measure of the new parliament was, in constitutional principle, the most important in the whole reign. The greater part of the taxes had been granted to James, as to each preceding sovereign, for life; but both parties were now agreed that this too confiding liberality had more than once been the parent of great political evils, by making the sovereign too independent of his people. Not, however, to press the principle, which was hereafter to be the invariable rule of action, too harshly at first, the hereditary revenue of the crown and the excise were granted to William and Mary for their lives; but the customs were given only for a period of four years. It was with a very bad grace that William acquiesced in this new arrangement, which he looked upon as a mark of personal distrust of himself, and that he at last also

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permitted his civil list to be charged with an annuity of 20,000*l.* a year to the princess Anne, in addition to the income settled on her at her marriage.

William had scarcely set out on his Irish expedition when a conspiracy against his government was betrayed to Caernarthen, in time for the chief agents, lord Preston and a gentleman named Ashton, to be arrested. Ashton was executed, lord Preston was spared; but the confession, by which he purchased his pardon, laid bare the existence of very general disaffection, or at least of a very general disposition to provide for the possibility of a counter-revolution, by keeping up connexions with the court at St. Germain's. The government at the time had no idea of the extent of these dealings with the banished king; but we know now that some of the Scotch leaders, and some of the principal English ministers, especially Shrewsbury, Clarendon, Godolphin, and Marlborough, had conferences with his emissaries, and gave them apparently valuable information. Such conduct cannot be defended; but it is of a very different dye from the crime of dealing with the enemies of one's country in ordinary circumstances, and it may easily be accounted for. An age of revolutions unsettles men's political principles, and the elders of the existing generation had witnessed many revolutions. They had seen a king succeeded by a republic; a republic by a protector, a man of great energy and ability; and at his death they had seen the sceptre fall from the feeble hands of his heir, the consequent restoration of the old line, and the execution of many of the agents in the preceding revolutions. What had happened so recently was not unlikely to happen again. William's health was very precarious. The princess Anne was as feeble in mind as Richard Cromwell, and was believed to be not disinclined to the restoration of her father, whose revengeful disposition was well known. In such a state of things we can hardly wonder that those who felt that they must be the most conspicuous marks for his vengeance thought of their own preservation, and wished to secure at least his pardon, by professions of good will, and trifling acts of civility or of service.

In William's mind foreign politics were always of more importance than English affairs; and, at the beginning of 1691, he went to Holland to concert measures for the prosecution of the war against Louis. He had shown great political address in securing the alliance of the empire and of Spain; but in military skill he found himself altogether overmatched by the duke de Luxembourg, who gave him a severe defeat at Steinkirk, and another in 1692, at Landen, though the firmness and fertility of resource which he displayed under disaster enabled him to boast that, though he had lost so many battles, he still showed the enemy a firmer front than ever.

There is no doubt that his persevering resistance to the ambition of the French king was of great service to the whole of Europe, but his absence from Britain was always a time of danger for his government. Marlborough, in the course of his dealings with James, proposed to avail himself of the discontent that William's preference of foreigners had excited, to embarrass him in such a way that it was not impossible that, as he had already threatened, he would abandon the kingdom in disgust, rather than yield; or that, on the other hand, if he refused to yield, the kingdom would abandon him. The plan suggested was to carry an address in both houses of parliament, begging William to dismiss all foreigners from his service. Marlborough had already gained over many members to support this motion, when some of James's more real friends saw reason to suspect that though he was sincere in his wish to get rid of William, his object was not to place James, but the princess Anne upon the throne. In resentment against this supposed treachery they revealed the whole business to the earl of Portland. Marlborough was dismissed from all his employments; but, so complete was the influence of himself and his wife over the princess, that Anne refused to part with lady Marlborough, and rather than do so, gave up her apartments at Whitehall, and retired to Sion House.

James had other hopes, which he believed to rest on a better foundation. Louis had at last consented to attempt an invasion of England, which was to be executed by all the Irish regiments in the French service under Sarsfield, aided by 10,000 picked French soldiers under Mareschal Bellefonds; and a magnificent fleet was prepared, under the command of Tourville, to convey the expedition to the British shores. Admiral Russell was in command of the British fleet; but he was known to be personally offended with William, and he had been one of the earliest to negotiate with James. It was believed that he would avoid an action, and suffer Tourville to proceed unopposed to his destination; but James rendered it impossible for even those most favourable to him to serve him. His promises were all couched in terms of the most studied evasion; and Russell now told his principal agent that those evasions must be discarded; that, if he would proclaim an universal amnesty in distinct terms, then, and then only, his friends might be able to serve him. James's reply was an announcement of his intentions, if he should be restored, which it would have been insane in him to promulgate after his restoration had been effected. He did indeed issue a declaration promising forgiveness to the general body of his subjects; but the leading men of both parties were informed that they had no mercy to expect. For Marlborough, and Ormond, and Caermarthen, and Nottingham; for Burnet, and Tillotson, who had become

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archbishop of Canterbury, on Sancroft's refusing to take the oath of allegiance, there was no pardon. The judges who had presided at the trial of Ashton and lord Preston were also excepted, with the witnesses who had testified against them, and the jury who had convicted them; and even the poor fishermen who, without knowing James, had stopped him on the Kentish coast, were equally reserved for punishment. So lofty, in spite of all that happened, were James's ideas of his prerogative, and of his divine right to the throne, that he actually thought that it would tempt his subjects to restore him, to be assured that, when restored, he would hang only a few of them, and that the rest would feel as grateful as the stork in the fable was expected to be to the wolf, that he had not snapped their heads off when it was so clearly in his power to do so.

William was in Holland, hastening the equipment of the Dutch ships to join the English fleet; but the queen, wisely perceiving how much James's declaration must injure his cause, reprinted it, and aided in its dissemination. It caused universal surprise and consternation among the Jacobites, but no one was so surprised or indignant as Russell: from this time forth he resolved to be true to William. He himself had not been suspected by either the queen or the ministers, but others in high command in the fleet had been, and it was very difficult for her to know how to proceed. Wisely and magnanimously she resolved to display confidence in all, and to appeal to their honour, and to their professional and national spirit. In the middle of May, 1692, Tourville came sweeping down the Channel and was seen off Portland; Russell stood out to sea in pursuit of him, and the French admiral retreated to La Hogue. His resistance to a superior force was gallant; but the battle was not in doubt for a moment. In the action itself but few ships were taken; but those which fled were pursued into their ports and completely destroyed. When the English fleet retired, on the 24th of May, there was hardly a vessel left of the armament that had, but a week before, encouraged such hopes in the perverse, but ever sanguine, James. Yet the nation was discontented, from a general feeling that Russell might have done even more, and perhaps might have destroyed the harbours themselves. A parliamentary enquiry was instituted: lord Nottingham, the secretary, laid the blame on Russell's obstinacy; Russell found fault with Nottingham's ignorance of naval affairs. The lords espoused the cause of the peer; the commons took part with the commoner; and the disagreement of the two houses made all real investigation impracticable.

The same year, 1692, was also marked with an event which, of all others, has left the darkest stain on William's character. The Highlands of Scotland were almost always in a state that in Eng-

land would have been considered full of disorder and of danger. Private war between the chieftains of different clans was raging incessantly; and, even when there was no war, the absence of professed hostility secured no clan from the depredations of its neighbours. There was not even necessarily any hostility implied by such plunder: a foray, as an expedition for such a purpose was termed, might be merely an ingenious plan to lead to an acquaintance between strangers, or even to reconciliation between old friends parted by some temporary difference. To pacify the clans had long been a problem of difficulty to those statesmen who had the prosperity of Scotland at heart; and with this object a large sum of money had been entrusted, a year or two before, to lord Breadalbane, for the purpose of distribution among the chieftains. Lord Breadalbane, however, was believed to have kept the greater portion of the money himself. He was the head of a younger branch of the house of Campbell; and the chief of the whole name, Argyll, was, as has been already mentioned, an object of terror to the whole of the Highlanders who were not dependent on him. Next to the Grahams, the chief opponents of the Campbells were the Macdonalds, who were also subdivided into several smaller clans. Being enemies of Argyll, they were also enemies of the government, and the master of Stair conceived the idea that the making a terrible example of William's foes, by destroying one of the clans unfavourable to his interests, would be more effectual and cheaper than bribing them. As if the atrocity of such a wholesale massacre were not sufficiently odious, it was rendered more detestable by all the infamy that cowardice and treachery could add to it. The victims selected were the Macdonalds of Glencoe. Their chief had only made his submission to the government on the very last day allowed by the law, December 31, 1691: in fact, in legal strictness, he had not made it then; for, though he had arrived at Fort William on that day to take the oaths, no one there was competent to administer them, since the governor of the garrison was not a magistrate. The governor, however, furnished Macdonald with a letter to the sheriff, certifying that he had presented himself for the purpose in due time; and the sheriff administered the oaths to him on the 6th of January, and instantly sent a certificate to the government that he had done so. It was determined to disregard this certificate, and to treat the chief as a recusant, and William signed the order for the destruction of him and his whole clan.

In France, when Charles IX. commanded a massacre of his subjects in cold blood, one of the nobles who received the unhallowed mandate, replied that he had many soldiers under his command, but not one assassin. Unhappily, in Scotland, on this occasion, it

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was found that the same men could be soldiers and assassins too ; nor does history present a single instance of an assassination so perfidious. Captain Campbell, of Glenlyon, had married a niece of the chieftain, and, on the 1st of February, was sent to his house with 120 men, asking for quarters. They were hospitably received, and distributed among the clan, and for twelve days lived in intimacy with their unsuspecting hosts. The evenings were spent in friendly revelry ; the days were devoted by Campbell to obtaining a thorough acquaintance with the country, and with the passes through the mountains by which some might attempt to escape when the deed of blood should begin. On the day appointed for the slaughter he was to be joined by his commander, Colonel Hamilton, with 400 men. The night was stormy ; the roads were blocked up with fast-falling snow, and Hamilton had not arrived, but before daybreak Campbell began his murderous work. He himself was lodged in the house of a clansman, named Inverrigen. Inverrigen and his whole family, even the children, who clung to their murderers' knees, and begged for mercy, were slaughtered among the first. Lindsay, Campbell's lieutenant, knocked at the chieftain's door ; Macdonald himself was shot while bidding his servants bring out some refreshment for his visitors. The assassins stripped his wife, tore the rings from her dying fingers with their teeth, and left her weltering in her blood. They were disappointed of some of their intended victims, who were alarmed by the noise of the shots, and escaped. When Hamilton arrived in the forenoon there was but one person left alive in the whole glen ; he was above seventy years old, and that age had been fixed as the limit of destruction ; but, disappointed at having lost his share in the carnage, Hamilton murdered him too, and then vented his rage in burning the houses and carrying off the cattle as trophies of his triumph.

The blood that had been thus ruthlessly shed cried aloud for vengeance ; but it was long before it could make itself heard at all. It was not till the end of the ensuing year that William, at the urgent request of the queen, appointed a commission to investigate the matter ; and, as the duke of Hamilton, the president, died soon afterwards, he let the investigation drop, hoping, apparently, to evade the enquiry altogether, till at the beginning 1695, the indignation of the Scotch parliament could no longer be trifled with, and a second commission was appointed. Even then the expedient of delay was tried to blunt the wrath of the kinsmen of the victims, and the report was reluctantly produced. It absolved all but the master of Stair ; and the parliament, in a series of resolutions founded on the report, left it to the royal wisdom to deal with him in such a manner as might vindicate the honour of the government ;

while at the same time they requested his majesty to order Campbell, Lindsay, and the other officers actually concerned in the massacre, to be prosecuted. The fatal warrant had been signed and countersigned by William himself, in a manner only used when he required the promptest obedience; but the parliament had resolved that this fact did not show that he intended the results which had taken place. Unhappily for his fame, he chose to prove to all the world that he had intended them. He did, indeed, dismiss Stair from his office for a time; but he took many opportunities to show that he had in no degree lost his confidence, and his whole conduct towards him was a proof that he had consented to the bloody deed before, and that he did not in his heart condemn it after the execution.

The war against Louis, prosecuted with such energy as William put forth, was very costly, and its expense introduced a total change into the financial system of the kingdom. As long as they could do so the ministers endeavoured to meet the charges of the war by increased taxation, by raising the land-tax, and imposing new import duties; but, with all their ingenuity, the yearly revenue fell short of the estimated expenditure by a million of money. The crisis was embarrassing; but fortunately there had lately been added to the ministry a man fully equal to deal with it, Charles Montague, than whom no financier of greater abilities, or more original genius, ever sat in the house of commons. Much of his success he himself attributed to his practice of giving audience to the very wildest projectors, from the most fanciful of whose speculations he at times derived sound practical hints. He now brought forward a proposal for a loan of a million to be raised by life annuities, imposing at the same time fresh duties to meet the interest. This was the origin of the national debt, which, having been long looked on as an incubus, pressing on the resources of the state with intolerable weight, and certain ultimately to overwhelm them, is now more justly considered a salutary system, giving the people in general a greater interest in the welfare of the nation, by providing the economical and industrious classes with a safe investment for the proceeds of their economy and industry.

The next question that occupied the attention of parliament was the reform of the house of commons. It was felt, almost universally, that the members were too much under the influence of the crown, an evil which was attributed to two causes; firstly, to the vast number of placemen, removable at pleasure, who had seats in the house; secondly, to the power, which the sovereign possessed, of keeping the same parliament in existence for an indefinite period; and the two parties differed as to which cause should be removed. The Tories proposed to exclude placemen from the house; the Whigs proposed to limit the duration of each parlia-

A.D. 1694.

ment ; while many statesmen of both parties thought that no reform could be effectual which did not combine both those measures. Accordingly, two bills were brought forward : a place bill ; and one to limit the duration of each parliament to three years, and from its object called the triennial bill. Both propositions were viewed with great dislike by William, who conceived that they trenchd on his prerogative. He more than once refused his assent to them, and the place bill was ultimately thrown aside ; but, in 1694, the triennial bill was passed ; and the end of the year 1696 was fixed for the dissolution of the existing parliament.

But about the same time an event took place which, in its ultimate effect, did more towards reforming the house of commons than a dozen bills framed with that express object could have effected. At the beginning of 1695 the commons refused to renew the licensing act, by the provisions of which nothing could be published without the sanction of an officer appointed to examine all new works. The law expired in May, and within a fortnight of its expiration was published the first real newspaper ; (for the "Gazette," being edited by a clerk in the office of the secretary of state, contained nothing beyond what the minister chose the nation to know ;) a similar paper had, indeed, been published in the latter part of the reign of Charles II., but had been speedily suppressed. Now, however, before the end of the year, no fewer than ten newspapers were in active circulation, small and meagre, it is true, when compared with the vast mass, often containing the matter of an octavo volume in a single number, which is now daily laid upon the breakfast-table ; but ample and all-important in the eyes of a generation which, at the beginning of the year, had no means whatever of obtaining the information thus afforded.

For a moment we must retrace our steps. Early in 1693, a fresh declaration was issued from St. Germain. In England the Jacobites were divided into Compounders, who, though they desired the restoration of James, wished it to be accompanied with guarantees for the civil and religious liberties of all classes of his subjects, and Noncompounders, who had no idea that any one had a right to make conditions with the Lord's anointed. The Compounders had a great majority in England ; but the councillors at St. Germain were chiefly of the other party. The French ministers, however, had by this time learnt enough of the real state of England to feel sure that the counsels of the Noncompounders would never bring about the restoration for which they hoped ; and Louis seriously advised James to adopt a milder and more conciliatory line of conduct than he had as yet thought consistent with his dignity. Accordingly lord Middleton, one of the ablest and most moderate of the Compounders, was invited to France to assume the post of secretary of

state in conjunction with Melfort. His presence at James's court gave William some uneasiness at first, and though Middleton could not prevail on James to adopt the favourite expedient of the English Jacobites, by resigning his crown in favour of the prince of Wales, and allowing him to be bred up as a Protestant, he did persuade him to issue a declaration containing an entire amnesty, and ample promises of consenting to every measure which the parliament might think necessary for the security of the civil and religious liberties of the kingdom. But men had now learnt to distrust James's sincerity (and they had reason to do so; for, in fact, Melfort wrote at the same time to Rome that this promised amnesty was meant as a delusion); and this declaration gained over no party in England, while it disgusted his partisans in Ireland, who looked upon it as an open desertion of them.

CHAPTER L.

WILLIAM AND MARY (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1693.
1696.



T the same time changes were taking place in England, which rendered the chance of his restoration more improbable than ever. Of late years William had been influenced chiefly by the Tories, but they had become very unpopular. Lord Caermarthen, their chief leader, was very generally accused of corruption. Lord Nottingham was despised, because of the scanty success of our naval affairs, which were chiefly under his management. Another Tory, a Mr. Harley, who, in the next reign, rose to be prime minister, was active in opposition to many of William's favourite measures, especially to the naturalization of foreigners, and to the increase of the army; while these measures were warmly advocated by the Whigs, one of whom, Montague, was the most eloquent defender of his conduct, and of his principles. Moreover, the Tories were a divided body, when compared with the steady union which bound together the leading Whigs. Shrewsbury, Somers, Montague, Russell, and a few others, the leaders of that party, were known by the name of the Junto, and acted in close and invariable concert; and the king now placed all the power in their hands. It was on Montague, as chancellor of the exchequer, that the chief burden of the administration fell, as the principal difficulty was to raise supplies for the

A.D. 1694

war; and we may learn to appreciate the wisdom of his general policy by recollecting that many of the taxes and of the measures which he then introduced, such, for instance, as the stamp duties, and the duty on hired carriages, have subsisted to the present time. He also established the Bank of England, on the condition that the shareholders should lend the government a large sum at a low rate of interest; and, by thus giving the capitalists of the country a direct concern in the maintenance of the revolution, he established a principle, which, in subsequent years, more than once proved the salvation of the kingdom.

There were other difficulties for Montague to grapple with. The metal of the coinage was pure; but the mode of coining, which had never been altered since the time of Edward I., afforded such facilities for diminishing the value of each coin by clipping and paring, that it was believed that the whole sum in circulation in the kingdom did not in reality reach half its ostensible value. Montague called in the old coinage, and issued a new one; but, at first, the Mint was unable to produce the money required with sufficient rapidity. Luckily, just at this crisis, the office of master of the Mint fell vacant, and Montague bestowed it on sir Isaac Newton. His mighty genius, as capable of practical application to minute details as to the most vast and sublime calculations, speedily put an end to the old delays of the establishment. The weekly issue of coin was raised eightfold; and by the beginning of August, 1696, all difficulty and distress had passed away.

We must return to the progress of the war. Ever since the battle of La Hogue, a descent on the French coast had been a favourite project with those who fancied that they had learnt, from that battle, that our naval force was the arm to which we ought to trust for important success against France. In his speech to parliament, in November, 1692, William (not very prudently, considering that his language was sure to be known to, and taken as a warning by the enemy) promised that such a descent should be attempted. At the beginning of 1693 a squadron was collected, and several thousand men were embarked, avowedly for the purpose of attacking Brest; but, for some reason or other, the expedition was not proceeded with. In November Benbow sailed with a considerable squadron, and bombarded St. Malo, but did not think himself strong enough to attack any more important place. In the spring of 1694 a squadron was again prepared to attack Brest, and a considerable land force was embarked on board of it, under Talmash, than whom no officer in the service, except Marlborough, had a higher reputation; but the enterprise wholly failed. It was delayed for some weeks by contrary winds. The former attempts had put the French on their guard; and the ministers had been so imprudent

as to consult Frenchmen with reference to this very expedition. When the troops landed they found the place so strongly fortified as to be almost unassailable. Talmash himself was mortally wounded, and his men were forced to retire with considerable loss. It is a singular specimen of the manner in which the statesmen at home sought to keep in with James, that the day before the expedition was intended to sail, Marlborough wrote James an account of its object; carefully withholding his information as long as it could be of any use, and yet giving it in time to enable himself to make a merit of it, if the Stuarts should ever be restored.

Mary was several years younger than her husband, and endowed with a much stronger constitution; but, at the end of the year 1694, she was attacked by the measles, and died after a short illness; and William was for some time so affected by her loss as to be quite unable to attend to business. Almost at the same time another death took place, which had even a greater influence over his fortunes, that of Luxembourg, who was succeeded in the command of the army of the Netherlands by Villeroy, a favourite of Louis's, brave as are all the nobles of that gallant land, but destitute of military skill; and the knowledge of his incapacity determined William to assume the offensive in the next campaign. He decided on attacking Namur; the capture of that fortress in 1692 was the exploit, of all others, of which Louis was most proud, and which his flatterers had celebrated with the most exaggerated panegyric. William now retaliated on Villeroy the manœuvres by which Luxembourg had out-generalled himself; and, after some skilful marches and counter-marches to conceal his object till the last moment, he left the prince de Vaudemont with a strong detachment to watch and amuse Villeroy, and arrived so suddenly before Namur, that marshal Boufflers had scarcely time to throw himself with a few regiments into the town before its blockade was completed. Villeroy, whose force was very superior in numbers, prepared to attack De Vaudemont, and wrote letters to Louis full of boastful promises of a certain victory; but his attack failed through the cowardice of Louis's favourite son, the duke de Maine, who commanded the left wing of the French army, and Namur was taken. The loss of the place was by itself sufficiently mortifying; but the cause of the disaster, which, however, the courtiers concealed as long as they could, was so much more painful, that when at last Louis discovered it, for the first and only time in his reign he forgot his usual majestic dignity, and walked sulkily about his palace without finding any one on whom to vent his wrath, till he came upon an unhappy footman pilfering some biscuits as he was removing a dessert, when to the astonishment of the lords and ladies who followed in his train, he ran after the terrified culprit, loaded him

A.D. 1697.

with opprobrious epithets, broke his cane over his shoulders, and pursued him, still punching him with the fragment, all through the passages.

While William was reaping glory in Flanders, a plot was forming at home to assassinate him. One plot had been detected a year or two before, and Grandval, the assassin, declared that he had been instructed by Barbesieux, the French minister; and that James had, in person, expressed to him his approval of the design. Nor, though William published his confession, did the court of France take any steps to clear itself from so foul an accusation. The death of Mary had made them more eager to compass the death of William; and a large band of conspirators agreed to waylay his coach and shoot him. James and the duke of Berwick came to Calais with a considerable body of troops ready to cross the Channel the moment that a beacon fire should give them notice that the deed was done; but the plot was betrayed, and the chief conspirators taken and executed. One person who was implicated was sir John Fenwick, who escaped at the time, and kept himself concealed till his friends got one of the two witnesses, on whom the prosecution depended, out of the way. He could not therefore be legally convicted; but, as William had a personal dislike to him, on account of his having behaved with insolence to queen Mary, he procured a bill of attainder to be passed against him, under which he was executed, being the last person who has suffered by such a mode of procedure.

The French, in common with the rest of Europe, were becoming weary of the war; and, in the spring of 1697, Louis made proposals of peace. William listened to them willingly; and, in spite of the opposition of Spain and Germany, a congress was opened at Ryswick, a village near the Hague, where William had a country house, in which the conferences took place. After a long and tedious negotiation, peace was concluded; it hardly answered all the ends which William had proposed to himself in first forming the alliance against France, but Louis restored most of the conquests which he had made since the peace of Nimeguen, and recognized William as king of Great Britain, giving his royal word neither directly nor indirectly to assist his enemies, nor to favour, in any way, any conspiracies or secret rebellions which might arise in England. In England the news of the peace was received with great joy, and William's reception on his return almost resembled a triumphal procession.

The country this year had a singular visitor in the person of Peter, the founder, as he may be called, of the Russian empire. He was travelling in different countries to enlarge his experience; and came to England with the special object of acquainting him-

self with naval affairs; for he was already contemplating the building of a fleet in the sea of Azoph, with which to attack the Turkish empire. Those who conversed with him could not but be sensible of his courage, of his abilities, though of these they hardly appreciated the extent, and of his perseverance; but they were so much more struck with his capriciousness and his brutality, which he frequently inflamed almost to madness by drinking large quantities of spirits, that the reflections bishop Burnet made upon him were, that those who judged by a single example, might be led to think man a very contemptible thing in the sight of God, when such a person as Peter had such vast multitudes put, as it were, under his feet, exposed to his restless jealousy and savage temper.

The peace, however desirable for William, as apparently securing his title against all attempts from France, did yet, in its consequences, cause him great personal annoyance, in consequence of the decision of the house of commons that it was no longer necessary to keep on foot such a force as he himself wished to maintain. Part of his disappointment was owing to his own habitual reserve, as he would not declare the number of troops which he desired to keep under arms, till the house was committed to a much smaller number; and at last the force to be maintained was fixed at 10,000 men; and this resolution, of itself sufficiently distasteful to the king, was made more so by an additional clause, that the troops which remained should consist wholly of his natural-born English subjects. This was intended to compel the dismissal of his Dutch troops, in accordance with the promise which he had voluntarily made on their first introduction ten years before; but he always looked upon them as more his own countrymen than the English; and, though he gave a formal consent to the resolution of the parliament, he hoped to find some means of evading this obnoxious clause. He even condescended, at last, to address a request to the commons "out of consideration to him, to find a way for continuing them longer in his service," and assured them that "he would take it very kindly; and, when he found this entreaty unavailing, he showed more anger than on any other occasion in his life. He revived his old idea of returning to Holland, and putting the English government in commission; and even threatened one of his nobles with bringing about the restoration of the Stuarts in the person of the youthful prince of Wales.

He had troubles also in Ireland and in Scotland: in Ireland principally from the unreasonable jealousy of the English parliament, which petitioned him to discourage the Irish manufacture of woollen stuffs; and in Scotland from the ruin of a colony which a Scotch company, under the guidance of an enterprising merchant,

A.D. 1699.

named Paterson, tried to establish at Darien, and which was expected to enrich the whole kingdom : but the Spaniards complained of the settlement as an invasion of their territory, and attacked it with great vigour ; the English colonies in North America, which were beginning to flourish, were also jealous of it ; and, in the end, it was entirely ruined, to the great disappointment of the whole Scotch people. William himself was more affected by an attack made on an exercise of his prerogative by the English parliament. On the establishment of his authority in Ireland, very large estates were declared to have become forfeited to the crown by those who persisted in their allegiance to James. On principle, they were in the power of the sovereign ; but he had promised to be guided in the disposal of them by the parliament. As, however, the parliament, in the several sessions that had taken place since their forfeiture, had taken no steps relating to them, he, of his own authority, made enormous grants from them to his favourites, chiefly foreigners, such as lord Portland, lord Albemarle, and lord Athlone, and to his mistress, lady Orkney, whose brother he had likewise raised to the peerage as earl of Jersey. The value of the grants was greatly exaggerated by those who brought the matter before parliament ; but the Dutch were so universally hated that all parties agreed in a bill to resume them, and to apply the proceeds of them to the payment of the public debts, to which William, though in great anger, felt himself compelled to assent ; but when he found that, emboldened by their success, they were preparing an address to beg him to remove all foreigners from his councils, he prorogued them ; and when they next met important questions of foreign politics engrossed their attention.

In the interval, however, he made a spirited demonstration in favour of his young ally, Charles XII. of Sweden, who had succeeded to his throne during the negotiations at Ryswick, which were conducted under the mediation of his father, and afterwards of himself. He was very young, and, as no one suspected his military talents, Peter of Russia stirred up the kings of Poland and Denmark to join him in an attack upon his territories ; but William sent sir George Rooke, at the head of a powerful fleet, into the Baltic, who bombarded Copenhagen, and, by this one blow, dissolved the coalition before Charles had suffered any evil effect from it, and extended the influence by this plain manifestation of the power of England.

The succession to the Spanish throne, which was likely to be soon vacant, as the health of the king of Spain, Charles II., was evidently failing, now began to attract the attention of all the European princes, and of none more than William. Charles had neither sons nor brothers, and, as the queen of Louis XIV., Maria

Teresa, had been his eldest sister, her eldest son was the natural heir of that vast monarchy, but Louis, on his marriage, had solemnly renounced all claims on Spain for all his children; the next heir was the elector of Bavaria, the grandson of Charles's second sister, Margaret, who had been married to the emperor Leopold; the third claimant was the emperor Leopold himself, in his character of grandson of Philip III. His claim he transferred to his second son, the archduke Charles. If the renunciation of the French princes was to have its just effect, the elector of Bavaria had indisputably the best right to the succession; but it was soon apparent that Louis did not intend to be bound by the stipulations which he had made at the time of his marriage; and that he cherished the idea of obtaining a portion of the Spanish dominions for Philip, duke of Anjou, the second son of the dauphin; and with this view he consented to a treaty of partition, the terms of which were settled by him and William, and which provided that the Bavarian prince should become king of Spain, of the Netherlands, and of the Spanish possessions in the West Indies and in America; the French prince was to have the Two Sicilies, and the archduke Charles the Milanese; but this treaty, and a will, executed by Charles II., leaving the whole of his dominions to the elector, was nullified by the death of the elector the next year: and on this event Louis consented to execute a second partition treaty, which gave the archduke the share that had been allotted to the elector; and the Milanese, as well as the Two Sicilies, to the French prince. But at the very time that Louis signed this treaty he was meditating the infraction of it. The idea of the dismemberment of their monarchy was odious to every Spaniard, and especially to Charles II. himself, whom it had influenced to make his first will in favour of the elector, and who was now easily induced by the French ambassador, and by the French partisans among his own ministers, to make a second, bequeathing the whole of his dominions to Philip. It had scarcely been signed, when, in November, 1700, Charles died, and Philip was proclaimed king of Spain, and was acknowledged as such by William. The prudence with which William had acted in negotiating these treaties, though sufficiently clear at the present day, was much disputed at the time; and, in this instance again, the manner in which he had acted greatly contributed to excite the opponents of his measures to find fault with the actions themselves. He had conducted the negotiations himself without consulting any of his ministers, except lord Portland and lord Jersey; and had induced lord Somers, as chancellor, to affix the great seal to blank powers as a legal authority to the negotiations; a step which was contrary to every principle of the constitution: and this unconstitutional and impolitic conduct afforded the Tory

A.D. 1702.

party a handle for attacking the ministry, of which they made a prompt and vigorous use, their leaders in the commons, at the beginning of the year 1701, impeaching Somers, Portland, Montague, who had lately been created lord Halifax, and admiral Russell, who had been made lord Orford; but in the preliminary proceedings a quarrel arose between the commons and the lords, and the prosecution in consequence was suffered to drop. And, before it could be revived, a more serious matter engaged their attention. The duke of Gloucester, the son of the princess Anne, and heir presumptive to the crown, had lately died, and in consequence it became necessary to provide for the succession, in the event, which now seemed probable, of the princess dying childless; and it was settled on the princess Sophia, the wife of the elector of Hanover, and daughter of Elizabeth, the unfortunate queen of Bohemia, who, as we have seen, was daughter of James I.; while the parliament wisely took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded them of introducing into the act of settlement several provisions necessary for securing the kingdom's general independence of the foreign connexions in which it seemed likely to become permanently involved, the purer administration of justice, and the curtailment of the undue influence of the crown.

Though he had acknowledged Philip as king of Spain, William had endeavoured to prevail on the parliament to prepare for a fresh war with France, but met with no success, till Louis himself assisted him by an act of the most impolitic faithlessness. In September, 1701, king James died at St. Germain's; and, in open violation of the stipulations and of the treaty of Ryswick, Louis immediately acknowledged his son, the prince of Wales, as king of England. This studied insult united all parties in the kingdom in support of William. Loyal addresses to him were voted by both houses of parliament, alliances with powers unfriendly to France were eagerly formed, acts abjuring and attainting the prince of Wales were passed, and vigorous preparations for war were being made, when, at the beginning of 1702, William broke his collar-bone by a fall from his horse; and so enfeebled was his constitution, that this accident, usually of such a trifling character, proved fatal. On the 8th of March he died, in the fifty-second year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign.

If we measure William by the standard of his achievements, there is no doubt that he must be considered a very great man. Certainly he was favoured by circumstances. Yet while the ruler of but a small state, and with powers carefully limited, he opposed a formidable barrier to the ambition of Louis XIV.; he acquired and maintained the sovereignty of a kingdom far more important than his native country, and he governed that kingdom

in a way that very greatly extended its influence and his own renown. As a general, though possessed of the most indomitable courage, he never attained very eminent skill; and during the greater part of his career he was opposed to the most consummate commanders of Europe; but as a statesman he has had few equals. Nor is it easy to mention any triumph of diplomacy more brilliant than that which crowned his exertions, when he induced the principal Roman Catholic powers of Europe to look with a complacency, which alone could render it successful, on the enterprise which he, a Protestant, was undertaking against a Roman Catholic prince, and to acquiesce in his fixing so powerful a nation as Great Britain for ever in the Protestant faith and interest.

To these kingdoms he rendered most important and durable service, securing to them the full and permanent enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, which, without him, was in no small danger of disappearing from the face of the earth; yet, in some respects, it is as the ruler of these kingdoms that he appears in the light the least advantageous to his reputation. He always considered them as of secondary importance; he valued his sovereignty over them chiefly as giving him additional means of opposing the designs of Louis with success; he made their domestic interests always subservient to his views of foreign policy; and he invariably showed a preference for his original fellow-countrymen, the Dutch, over his new subjects, the English. His conduct in so doing was neither just nor politic; it led him on more than one occasion into grievous errors; and, by the jealousy which it created in the British parliament, it often greatly impeded the successful prosecution of his designs. His manners, singularly ungracious at all times, increased this jealousy, and often excited a prejudice against his measures, which of themselves they would not have provoked. Yet these blemishes, serious though one or two of them may be, ought not to blind us to his talents, nor to render us ungrateful for his services. Those talents were great, various, and exerted with great perseverance for the general benefit of Europe, and especially for the benefit of the inhabitants of these islands; those services, which by that persevering exertion of those talents he did render, have been felt ever since his time, and we may safely predict will be felt, as long as Englishmen have the spirit to appreciate the blessings of the secure exercise of a pure religion, and the undisturbed enjoyment of a well-regulated liberty.

CHAPTER LI.

ANNE.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Prussia.</i>
Leopold.		Louis XIV.	Frederic I.
Joseph I. . . .	1705	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Russia.</i>
Charles VI. . . .	1711	Philip V.	Peter.
		<i>Sweden.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
		Charles XII.	Clement XI.

A.D.
1702.

WILLIAM was succeeded by the princess Anne, the second daughter of James II., by his first wife. She was now in the thirty-eighth year of her age, and had been married many years to prince George of Denmark, by whom she had had seventeen children, who were now all dead. She had been on very cool terms with the late king during nearly the whole of his reign ; and, as he was not very popular with the generality of the nation, her accession was hailed with a very general joy.

The English parliament granted her the revenue of the civil list for life, settled a large revenue on prince George, in the event of his surviving her, and voted large sums for carrying on the intended war. The Scottish parliament granted the taxes which she requested, and empowered her to name commissioners to treat of the union between the two kingdoms, a wise and necessary measure, which had been several times proposed, and which had occupied as much of the attention of the late king as he could spare from his foreign policy ; and though Ireland was not restored to perfect tranquillity, yet there seemed no reason to apprehend any difficulties to the queen's government from that quarter.

William had died in the middle of preparations for war ; and the queen's first speech to her parliament announced that she felt compelled by the conduct of France in pursuing a constant policy of aggrandizement, and by Louis's acknowledgment of her brother as king, to show that the policy of England was not altered by the change of sovereigns ; accordingly, in the very week after her accession, she sent Marlborough to Holland to assure the Dutch estates, that she intended fully to adhere to the alliances which William had formed ; while, with a view to the vigorous prosecution of the war,

in which Marlborough was to have the command of the English army, several changes were made in the ministry; lord Godolphin being placed at the head of the treasury, at the express desire of Marlborough, who represented it as indispensable to his conduct of the ensuing campaign that he should be able to rely on the punctuality of remittances from England to pay the troops.

At the beginning of May war was formally declared by England, Holland, and Germany against France and Spain; and the next week Marlborough assumed the command of the allied armies in the Netherlands. He found himself at the head of 60,000 men; and, though always cautious to avoid unnecessary risk, he would have thought himself strong enough to undertake offensive operations on a large scale, had it not been for the timidity of the Dutch government, which sadly fettered his free action, and compelled him to limit his measures to the siege of some towns, all of which were successively taken, but all of which, except Liege, were of comparatively small importance.

At the same time a powerful fleet, under sir George Rooke, was sent to Spain, with a military force, commanded by the duke of Ormond, intended to destroy Cadiz. The attempt on that town failed; but, as the British were retiring, they heard that a large French and Spanish fleet, convoying a number of galleons, laden with an immense treasure, had taken shelter in Vigo Bay. They forced their way into the bay, and wholly destroyed every vessel, acquiring an enormous booty, and inflicting a most serious injury on the enemy, with the loss of a very few men.

The queen was a person of such feeble mind as to be always under the dominion of some favourite; and she had, as has been already mentioned, contracted a friendship with lady Marlborough, of so enthusiastic a character on her part, that she fancied the ordinary maintenance of her rank an impediment to it, and insisted that in their common intercourse they should both lay aside their titles, and know one another only as Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman, while Marlborough was usually spoken of in their correspondence as Mr. Freeman. Mrs. Freeman's influence was a fortunate event for the kingdom, as it naturally led to her husband having the entire management of the war. On his return from this campaign Anne made him a duke, and granted him a pension of 5000*l.* a year on the post-office during her own life. She even wished to annex the annuity for ever to the title; but the commons refused to acquiesce, though afterwards, in the exultation caused by the battle of Blenheim, they gave effect to her desire.

The military operations of the next year were also confined to a few sieges, conducted by Marlborough with invariable success; but so annoyed was he at the constant interference of the Duke

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with his plans, by which he was continually prevented from reaping the natural fruit of his triumphs, that he seriously meditated throwing up his command, and returning to England. Fortunately, however, the issue of these two campaigns increased their confidence in him; and, in the beginning of 1704, they consented to his transferring the scene of action from the Low Countries to the banks of the Rhine and of the Danube, where the French were preparing to join the elector of Bavaria, and, if unopposed, seemed to threaten the safety of Vienna.

On the 19th of May he began his march towards Germany, and it was soon seen how sagaciously his plans had been laid, as the mere knowledge of his advance paralyzed the Bavarian troops, and suspended their march towards the Austrian capital, though none of the enemy could as yet divine his real intentions. At the beginning of June he met the great imperial general, prince Eugene of Savoy, and with him concerted the subsequent operations of the campaign. Steadily and rapidly he pressed forwards, receiving reinforcements on his way, forced the camp of the elector of Bavaria at Donawerth, and gave him a severe beating, and on the 10th of August crossed the Danube, and came in front of the French army. He had just been joined by prince Eugene, and their united force amounted to about 52,000 men. The French and Bavarians, commanded by marshal Tallard, were rather more numerous. They had also the advantage of a strong position, around the village of Blenheim, from which we have named the victory that ensued; while the French speak of it as the battle of Hochstedt, from a small town in the English line of advance. Tallard had a high reputation, and was a skilful officer; but he was taken by surprise by the attack, which many of the officers in the allied army thought too dangerous to be attempted with prudence. It was the 13th of August, and the day had not yet dawned, when the British and imperial troops began to advance; yet so difficult was the ground in front of them, that midday was past before lord Cutts, the bravest in an army where all were heroes, began the attack on Blenheim. The enemy had a numerous artillery, skilfully served. The carnage was terrific; but nothing could resist the terrible impetuosity of the English battalions. In one part of the battle the gallantry of the Irish brigade, in the service of Louis, gained a temporary advantage; but Marlborough, who, throughout the day was wherever the action was hottest, hastened to the spot, and by his presence of mind and personal exertions restored the fight. At last, after a ceaseless struggle of more than four hours, the French were broken in every part of the field. Marlborough brought up the whole of his cavalry for a final charge, and the rout was complete. The last event of the day, after sunset, was the surrender of the

troops posted in Blenheim itself, who, long after their comrades had been defeated, maintained a gallant resistance, till they were surrounded and overpowered by superior numbers. More than one of the regiments burnt their colours, and buried their arms, that they might not fall into the hands of their enemies; but the victorious army could dispense with a few idle trophies. There had never been a more complete victory: 12,000 of the enemy lay dead on the field; numbers, in attempting to flee, were drowned in the Danube; 10,000, with Tallard himself, were made prisoners of war; while the whole of their baggage and artillery also became the prize of the conquerors.

The consequences of such a victory could not fail to be important; it encouraged the king of Prussia to join the alliance, and emboldened the emperor to make more vigorous exertions in Italy; it led also to the reduction of many strong fortresses which afforded winter-quarters for the army; and, if it did not unite parties in England, it compelled the opponents of the government to silence.

Nor was it the only triumph of the year. The navy emulated the army in its zeal for the public service: and though it had no opportunity of rivalling the splendour of Marlborough's victory, it achieved one success of so durable a character that the present generation enjoys its fruits, and a second, which proved to the French monarch that the contest between the two nations was more unequal by sea than even on land. The first advantage gained by our sailors arose, like Penn's acquisition of Jamaica, out of a disappointment of our admiral's original plan. Sir George Rooke, at the head of a splendid fleet, aided by a Dutch squadron, had been cruising in the Mediterranean in search of a French fleet which was known to have been recently equipped at Toulon. Failing to meet with it, for indeed it was still in harbour, and being similarly baffled in one or two other operations which he had proposed to himself, he resolved to attack Gibraltar. It was an audacious enterprise, one which half a century before, Blake, bold as he was, had looked upon as beyond his means to achieve; but not only was Rooke's fleet more powerful than Blake's, but it carried also a small body of soldiers under the command of the prince of Hesse d'Armstadt. Hoping to effect his object by surprise, the moment that Rooke had decided on the plan he carried it into execution: fortunately, the Spaniards had trusted so entirely to the natural strength of the fortress, that they had been careless about maintaining an adequate garrison; and don Diego de Salinas the governor had not troops enough to man the works for a single day; much less to withstand the fire which, on the 23d of July, the British admiral, unsuspecting of his weakness, poured upon them from every ship in his fleet. In five hours he had demolished

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some of the chief batteries ; a body of sailors landed and stormed the redoubts in the rear ; the governor, completely overpowered, surrendered ; and though, as we were warring professedly to establish the archduke Charles on the Spanish throne, it would have seemed natural for us to occupy this great Spanish fortress in his name, Rooke, with a statesman-like perception of the importance to Britain of such a key to the Mediterranean, took possession of it for his own mistress ; hoisted British colours on the battlements, and Gibraltar has ever since continued one of our most valued strongholds : the more cherished, perhaps, as being our only possession on the continent of Europe.

It was not till near the end of the century, when France and Spain concentrated what may almost be called the whole of the united strength of the two nations on the attempt to recover it, that our statesmen at home seem fully to have appreciated its importance : but Louis from the first perceived its value to his grandeur, and sent instant orders to the count de Toulouse, one of his natural sons, who commanded the Toulon fleet, at once to put to sea, and drive the British admiral from the Mediterranean ; when the garrison which Rooke had thrown into Gibraltar, being thus cut off from support, and not yet furnished with supplies, would be compelled to surrender. Apparently Louis had good reason to calculate on the fulfilment of his orders ; for the count had above 90 vessels under his orders, while Rooke had but 53 ; and the inferiority in the size of his ships was as great as in his numbers. But, as in the days of the Armada, our superiority in seamanship and gunnery more than made up for any inequality of force. On the 13th of August, the very same day that Marlborough was rendering for ever memorable at Blenheim, the two fleets engaged one another off Malaga. The battle lasted the whole day : till at nightfall the French retreated, having lost five ships, which sunk either during the action or immediately afterwards : and though the next day Rooke pursued them with all speed, the wind so aided the count de Toulouse that he regained Toulon without any further conflict. Considering the vast disparity of the two fleets, Rooke's victory was a very brilliant exploit : and though Louis tried to disguise its reality from his subjects, he showed his own sense of its decisive character by keeping his fleets in their harbours for the future, and abstaining from naval operations for the remainder of his reign.

The campaign of the next year was comparatively unimportant in the Netherlands, but in Spain was signalized by events which for a while appeared to promise great results. The earl of Peterborough, a man of extraordinary talents for war, though rather for war carried on in an irregular and partisan fashion than according to scientific rules, landed in Spain with a small army of about

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5000 men, in the middle of June. He found himself as much impeded by the timidity of the archduke Charles and his advisers, as Marlborough was by the Dutch deputies. He was received with enthusiasm in Valencia, and would at once have advanced upon Madrid, had he not been overruled. He was compelled to remain on the coast, and to attack Barcelona. According to every rule of war that town was unassailable, except by a force four times greater than he had under his command; but he took it in less than a month. Other important towns submitted without attempting to make resistance. By the beginning of 1706 he had extended his conquests to Valencia. Lord Galway, who commanded on the other side of Spain, though destitute of any great military skill, was roused by emulation of his successes to some degree of energy, and advanced into the heart of Spain, and occupied Madrid. Peterborough wished to join him, and the two armies, if united, might have been able to maintain themselves in the capital; but Charles refused to consent to such an advance, and the duke of Berwick had driven Galway out of Madrid before he could be induced to alter his decision. Peterborough in disgust threw up his command; and, though one or two gleams of success shone for a moment on the arms of the archduke, in reality all chance of his permanent success disappeared with his rejection of the counsels of his invincible champion.

The year 1706, however, opened with another great victory in the Netherlands. Though the French had lost several considerable towns in 1705, and though Marlborough, in July, by an admirable series of movements, had forced their lines, and established himself in strength in their rear, yet they were so much encouraged by the fact of his having found no opportunity of delivering a decisive blow that they determined to assume the offensive, and Louis sent instructions to Villeroy to menace Marlborough's position. Villeroy, as brave as he was incompetent, executed his orders, and, on the 23rd of May, the two armies met at Ramillies, a village near the small rivers Geette and Mehaigne. The French had a very slight superiority in numbers; but, as their army was composed of the choicest of their troops, they made sure of victory. For a while the struggle was fierce; but at last they fled in utter confusion, leaving 3000 men dead on the field, 100 guns, and most of their baggage, standards, and ammunition; and Marlborough showed that he deserved his triumph, by setting an example of consideration and kindness towards his prisoners that had not hitherto been usually practised. The duke of Vendôme, a man given up to indolence and luxury, but gifted with a brilliant genius for war, and capable of the greatest energy when occasion required, was sent for from Italy to supersede Villeroy. During the whole of

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the year 1707 he avoided coming to any serious engagement; and Marlborough was so embarrassed in all his operations by the fears of the Dutch ministers that he was prevented from following out his own plans. In the early part of the year he had gone to Saxony on a mission to Charles XII. of Sweden, to persuade him not to interfere as a mediator between Louis and the allies, a line of conduct which the French king was eager for him to assume. His diplomatic address was as conspicuous, and almost as uniformly successful, as his military genius; and he entirely gained over both Charles and his minister, count Piper; not, indeed, without the employment of large bribes to the latter, a mode of persuasion of which Louis had previously made ample use with all the rest of the Swedish councillors.

But, while the cause of the allies was thus prospering in the north, they were hastening to ruin in Spain. Peterborough had won Catalonia, Valencia, and Aragon; but Galway's occupation of Madrid, where he allowed his soldiers to commit every kind of excess, had roused the Catalonians to arm in the cause of Philip. The duke of Berwick drove him from the capital, and almost destroyed his army at Almanza. Galway was succeeded in his command by general Stanhope, who for the next two years avoided any considerable disaster, but made no advance towards success.

But this same year, 1707, was signalized in this island by a measure contributing as much to its tranquillity and prosperity as any single act ever passed by the parliament, the union of England and Scotland. It had been often proposed since the two nations had been governed by the same king. It had been projected by William in the first year of his reign; and in almost the last week of his life, fully as he might have been supposed to be occupied with preparations for the impending war with France, (if, indeed, it were not the necessary greatness of those preparations which had revived the idea in his mind with increased urgency) he had earnestly impressed on the parliament the wisdom of such a measure. Recent events had only made more plain than ever its absolute necessity. The disasters of the Darien Company, and the inferior footing on which the Scotch commerce stood in respect of the English, had exasperated the whole nation; and not only had there been plots formed in Scotland for the restoration of the Stuarts, but the Scotch parliament in 1704 had passed a resolution which they called an act of security, providing that, on the death of the queen without issue, the estates of the kingdom should elect a sovereign who should not be the same person as the sovereign of England, unless in the mean time the independence and dignity of the kingdom on a footing of perfect equality were fully secured.

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The manifest danger of such a proceeding influenced the English parliament, which had hitherto been the chief hindrance to the measure. Commissioners, as has been already mentioned, had been appointed by both parliaments to settle the terms of union; and on the 1st of May, 1707, the complete incorporation of the two kingdoms took effect. It had been vigorously opposed by some eloquent and honest patriots in Scotland. It was only carried by shameful corruption, and was long unpopular among the Scotch; but its political expediency became more manifest year by year, as well as the practical benefits, which, though of great importance to England also, have, as was inevitable, flowed from it in still greater abundance upon the poorer and the weaker country.

The carrying of this great measure neither proved strength in, nor gave strength to, the ministry. The queen was becoming weary of the yoke of the duchess of Marlborough; and Harley, the secretary of state, though he originally owed his rise to Marlborough's favour, now, perceiving Anne's secret inclinations, took every opportunity of inflaming her against the duke, in which he was aided by a relation of his own and the duchess's, a Mrs. Masham, for whom the duchess had procured the situation of woman of the bed-chamber, and who, shortly afterwards, became the principal agent in the fall of her patroness. Harley himself was soon afterwards removed from his situation, having transacted the affairs of his office so carelessly, that one of his clerks, named Gregg, had access to all the most secret and important despatches, and, having been bribed by the French agents, transmitted copies of them to Paris. Gregg was executed for his treason; but Harley, though dismissed, was not at all lowered in the queen's confidence and regard, and soon found means to renew his intrigues against the ministry, and especially against Godolphin and Marlborough.

The obstacles interposed by the Dutch in the way of the active operations proposed by Marlborough were partly caused by an inclination which they showed at this time to conclude a separate peace with Louis, who would willingly have made considerable sacrifices to detach them from the allies. He even intimated a wish for a general peace, in which he probably was not sincere; and which the English parliament were too much elated by the recent victories to be willing to afford him on any conditions short of an entire renunciation of the Spanish succession.

The year 1708 opened with more vigorous efforts on both sides. Vendôme had entertained hopes of having Antwerp betrayed to him; but that design was baffled. He succeeded, however, in surprising Ghent and Bruges; and, encouraged by these advantages, prepared to attack Oudenarde, a fortress of great strength

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and importance on the Scheldt. Marlborough, who had just been joined by prince Eugene, though not by his army, which was still many miles distant, determined to fight a battle for the preservation of a town so important as a key to both Flanders and Brabant, and, by a skilful march, placed his whole army between the French and their own frontiers. He had about 80,000 men, the French above 100,000; but their efficiency was greatly impaired by the presence of the duke of Burgundy and other princes of the blood, who interfered with Vendôme's plans, and, at times, even countermanded his orders. On the 11th of July the great battle of Oudenarde took place. Vendôme displayed the highest military qualities; but they were all rendered useless by the admirable skill of Marlborough's arrangements, and the irresistible valour of his troops. He had many royal princes under him, who vied with one another in showing themselves worthy of their birth and of the commands which he assigned to them; especially the electoral prince of Hanover, afterwards George II. of England, distinguished himself by repeated charges at the head of a squadron of cavalry; and at last the French were driven in utter disorder from the field. The number of the slain was very great; 8000 were taken prisoners; several thousands more deserted; while the entire loss of the conquerors did not exceed 1000 killed and 2000 wounded. Marlborough followed up his advantage; again forced the French lines; and, at the beginning of the next month, laid siege to Lille, the capital of French Flanders, and one of the most important acquisitions of the great Condé. Since that time it had been fortified by the utmost skill of Vauban, and was now defended by a powerful garrison under marshal Boufflers, one of the most deservedly eminent of the French commanders. The duke of Berwick had arrived from Spain to take a command in the French army in Flanders, and made a fruitless endeavour to intercept the vast battering train which was destined for the siege; but Marlborough and Eugene had laid their plans too well for him to be able to find any opportunity of attacking it with advantage, and hoped to reduce him and Vendôme to the necessity of fighting a second battle, of the issue of which they had little doubt. On the 23rd of August the siege was formally commenced; on the 3rd of September the batteries opened their fire on the walls from 200 guns and mortars. In vain did Vendôme endeavour to throw reinforcements and supplies into the devoted city; in vain, by opening the sluices, and inundating the whole country around, did he attempt to cut off the communications of the allies. The necessary ammunition was conveyed in low flat boats across the waters, and the batteries never ceased their fire for a moment, till at last, on the 22nd of October, the breaches made were so considerable that

the besiegers prepared to storm the walls, and then Boufflers surrendered, after a gallant defence, which the allied generals appreciated so highly that they allowed him to fix the conditions of the surrender of the city; he retired into the citadel, and six weeks more elapsed before that also submitted; and Boufflers, defeated but not disgraced, marched out with all honours of war to rejoin his comrades.

Vendôme had hoped to counterbalance this blow by the surprise of Brussels, but Marlborough and Eugene forced a passage across the Scheldt, rendering an attempt on that city impracticable, and both armies retired into winter-quarters. The French were not more fortunate by sea; at the beginning of the year they sent out a naval expedition with the Pretender, as the son of king James was now called in England, and a considerable body of troops on board, which sailed to the north of the island with the intention of landing the prince in the Frith of Forth; but the English ministry, by great exertions, fitted out a fleet of equal numbers, under sir George Byng, who pursued them, and took one or two of the worst sailing vessels without the French admiral venturing on an engagement to save them. At last they were glad to return in safety to Dunkirk, though not till disease and the hardships of the expedition during the rough weather of the equinox had made such ravages in the troops that they were believed to have lost 4000 men. At the same time our sailors in the Mediterranean almost rivalled their former achievements. Sir G. Rooke died the year after Malaga; and sir Cloudesley Shovel had been lost with the greater part of his squadron by a calamitous shipwreck on the Scilly isles in the autumn of 1707. But the successor of these officers, sir John Leake, was animated by their spirit; and after reducing the French army in the peninsula to the greatest distress by the capture of some large fleets laden with provisions, he sailed against the islands belonging to the Spanish crown. He first attacked Sardinia, pouring upon its strongest place, Cagliari, so formidable a bombardment, that at the end of a single day he compelled the governor to capitulate; and then he undertook, in concert with general Stanhope, an enterprise which Peterborough had formerly contemplated, and which, since his departure, Marlborough had more than once strongly recommended, the reduction of Minorca. The island was far more strongly garrisoned and more strongly defended than Sardinia; but Stanhope had nearly 3000 men, and above 40 guns: and while he attacked the chief fortress, Port Mahon, Leake dividing his fleet, cannonaded not only that, but two other fortified towns on different sides of the island, fort Tornelle and Citadella, at the same time. Prevented by these simultaneous attacks from succouring each other, they all fell, and Stanhope,

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imitating Rooke's conduct at Gibraltar, took possession of Minorca in the name of queen Anne. Like Gibraltar it was the scene of more than one subsequent struggle, but it remained in our hands till the close of the American war, when, as will be related hereafter, it was restored to its former owners in exchange for settlements on the other side of the Atlantic.

In the winter, prince George of Denmark died, to the great and sincere grief of the queen; and the ministerial changes which took place afterwards, and partly in consequence of his death, for a while strengthened the duke of Marlborough's party. The duke himself, during the winter, had employment in Holland as important as his military operations, in repeated consultations with both the Dutch and English ministers on the proposals of peace, which Louis was now making both to the Dutch and the emperor. The war, which had been fraught with such unusual disasters to France, had produced terrible distress among the people. The taxes had been raised to the highest possible point, and yet the revenue fell short, far short of the expenses of the kingdom. The minister of finance, Chamillart, and his successor, Desmarets, endeavoured to supply the deficit by paper money; but that was only accepted at an enormous discount, and the credit, as well as the present resources of the kingdom, seemed in the last stage of depression. These evils produced an universal outcry for peace, which was even led by the duke of Burgundy, the presumptive heir to the throne. Louis could not refuse a demand so loud and so general, and, after vain endeavours to detach, first Holland, and then Savoy from the hostile alliance, he announced to Philip that he doubted the possibility of maintaining him on the throne of Spain. Philip showed no inclination to relinquish any part of his dominions; nevertheless, Louis made an offer to the emperor of Italy and the Netherlands for the archduke, on condition of Philip's being allowed to retain Spain and the Spanish settlements in the West Indian islands and America. The Netherlands and Italy were already lost; still the proposal was as reasonable as could have been expected, and was one which the allies might well have accepted, had they believed Louis sincere in making it; but he was doomed to pay the penalty of his long career of faithlessness, and his offers were refused. He then offered to surrender the whole of the Spanish succession, reserving only the throne of Naples and the Two Sicilies for Philip. Apparently, the readiness with which he made these great concessions increased the distrust which the allies entertained of him. It was known that he was still preparing to increase his army in the Netherlands, and Marlborough and Somers decided the English cabinet to require the abandonment by Philip of the whole of his dominions, the recognition by Louis of queen Anne, the expulsion

of the Stuarts from France, the demolition of Dunkirk, the cession of several fortresses on the northern frontier of France, to serve as a barrier for the Netherlands, and the restoration of all the acquisitions made by France since the peace of Westphalia.

It may be doubted whether true wisdom would ever dictate the imposition of such rigorous terms on a vanquished enemy as those to which Louis had offered to submit; and their rejection by the allies cannot be defended even by their suspicions of Louis's sincerity. He should have had the opportunity of proving the honesty of his professions; as it was, the treatment which they received, and the demands which had been substituted for his offers, enabled him to appeal to his people to support him against enemies whom no concessions could satisfy. He sent his own plate to the mint to be coined into money to pay the troops; many of his courtiers imitated his example; and he was thus enabled to provide marshal Villars, who was sent to the Netherlands to take the command, with a fine army of 90,000 men.

CHAPTER LII

ANNE (CONTINUED).



MARLBOROUGH and Eugene began the next campaign by laying siege to Tournay, a city so thoroughly fortified that, in the opinion of Villars himself, its reduction would take them the whole year; but the city was compelled to surrender in three weeks, and the citadel in five weeks more; and, with the view of forcing Villars to an action, the conquerors proceeded to invest Mons. Villars obtained leave from the king to hazard a battle for the preservation of Mons, and, on the 11th of September, the two armies met on the plains of Malplaquet; they were nearly equal; each rather exceeding the number of 90,000 men; the French had a slight superiority in cavalry, the English artillery was rather the more numerous and the more weighty. No better contested or more sanguinary conflict darkens the history of modern Europe with its sad tale of carnage. Boufflers, though senior to Villars in the service, had hastened to the scene of action to place himself under his orders, and the skill and courage which he displayed fully equalled the disinterested patriotism which had prompted such an abnegation of his dignity. It was but little after

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seven in the morning when the heavy booming of the artillery announced that the fight had begun ; it was late in the afternoon when Boufflers (for Villars had been carried severely wounded from the field) ordered a retreat, and with dauntless resolution rallied his broken battalions and retired towards Valenciennes. During the whole of that terrible day the conflict had been protracted with unyielding courage by both sides, and sometimes with varying fortune : even when the French retreated, and, by so doing, acknowledged their defeat, they left on the field of battle a far smaller number of killed and wounded than their assailants ; and Villars had some reason to say of the allies, what Pyrrhus of old had said of himself, that such another victory would be their ruin. Its chief fruit was the capture of Mons ; but the rain, which set in unusually early, prevented any further operations, and, in fact, Malplaquet was the last important action between the French and English during the war.

In spite, however, of Villars' boast, France was still less able than the allies to encounter such another battle, and again Louis opened negotiations for peace. It was agreed that plenipotentiaries from both sides would meet at the castle of Gertruydenberg, near Breda, and in the beginning of 1710 conferences were opened at that place ; but, if the allies entertained doubts of the sincerity of Louis before, they had far more reason for them now. At the very time that he was professing to treat for the cession of Spain by his grandson, he gave the ducal title of Anjou to the infant son of the duke of Burgundy, though it must of necessity have been resumed by Philip, if he had abandoned Spain, and returned to France ; and his plenipotentiaries, the marshal Huxelles, and the abbé de Polignac, not only received no instructions from him, (one of them never even saw him before his departure), but were sent, to use the expression of St. Simon, in masquerade, the marshal being forbidden to display his truncheon, and to wear his order, or other badges of his rank, while the abbé was compelled to give no small scandal to his clerical brethren by discarding his ecclesiastical vestments, and appearing, as long as the conference lasted, dressed in all points as a noble and a layman.

Still the conduct of the allies was again impolitic in demanding from Louis terms so hard that, even in the extremity of his distress, he appeared to have reason on his side when he rejected them. They consented, indeed, to leave Philip Naples and the two Sicilies ; but, on the other hand, they demanded for the Spanish monarchy the restoration of Roussillon, and all the territory which it had lost since the peace of the Pyrenees, and finally insisted that, if Philip refused to abandon Spain, Louis himself should join the allies in compelling him to do so. It was not unnatural for Louis to reply

that if he must make war he would rather fight his enemies than his grandson ; and, after four months of protracted negotiations, the conferences were broken off, and the war was carried on with fresh vigour, though Marlborough and Eugene were unable to bring the French generals to action, and were forced to content themselves with the capture of Douay, and other important towns.

While Europe in general was fixing its eyes earnestly on the castle of Gertruydenberg, England itself was much more agitated by the folly of the domestic policy of lord Godolphin. A silly clergyman, of the name of Sacheverell, on the 5th of November in the preceding year, had preached a mischievous and libellous sermon, inculcating the doctrines of passive obedience to their fullest extent, attacking the revolution and the late king, and, what was more offensive, sneering at the treasurer, whom he called Volpone, a name borrowed from Jonson's celebrated play. Godolphin brought the matter before the council, and insisted upon the impeachment of the preacher before the house of lords. It was to no purpose that lord Somers, who had been equally attacked in the sermon, suggested that it was beneath notice. The impeachment was resolved on, and Westminster Hall was fitted up for the occasion. The trial of the bishops had hardly produced such excitement among the populace, who, for some reason or other, espoused Sacheverell's cause with all their might. He had been bailed ; and, as he came each day to the court to take his trial, the mob pressed round his coach, cheering him, and begging to shake hands with him. The queen attended as a spectator, and the mob thronged round her carriage with loud exclamations : " God bless your majesty ! We hope you are for Dr. Sacheverell." As was to be expected, they did not confine their zeal to shouting. Being prompted in secret by some of the higher classes, they began to attack the meeting-houses. Formidable riots ensued, the guards were called out, and several people were killed before order could be restored. There was no need of witnesses against the prisoner ; for he owned the sermon, and his counsel justified the principles asserted in it by precedents drawn from the homilies of the Church, and the teaching of many divines of former ages, whose names were still held in veneration. Sacheverell was convicted ; but the feeling on his behalf was so strong, that his prosecutors did not venture to press for a more severe sentence against him than that he should be suspended from preaching for three years. If, however, Sacheverell escaped easily, the trial caused the downfall of the ministers. The queen had long been weary of them, and had been greatly pleased by the doctrines of passive obedience advanced by the counsel for the prisoner. Harley, who had been for some time watching his opportunity, paraded his support of Sacheverell,

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and had frequent secret communications with the queen. The Tory party got up petitions from the chief counties, and from several large cities, complaining both of the parliament and of the ministers, and in September Anne dissolved the parliament, and turned out the ministry. The treasury was put in commission, Harley being the chief member of it, and Mr. St. John, who for some years had been secretary at war became secretary of state.

In Spain more vigorous efforts were made by the contending parties than had been witnessed for the two previous years. Philip, at the head of a numerous army, of which the Spanish marquis Villadarias was the real commander, entered Catalonia, in the hope of gaining over that province from his rival; while Stanhope, with the British army, which had never been in better condition, invited Charles to place himself at its head, and to march into Aragon. The two armies met at Almenara, and Stanhope gained a victory which, though decided, was prevented by the lateness of the day from being very complete. Three weeks afterwards Philip sustained a much more severe defeat at Saragossa, and Stanhope and Charles marched on Madrid, of which they took possession at the end of September; but Philip's reverses reawakened the enthusiasm of the Castilians in his favour; and, as the night is darkest and coldest immediately before the dawn, so this, his hour of greatest disaster, was the immediate prelude to his final triumph. Philip's distress induced Louis to send Vendôme to his aid; and the arrival of that great general instantly changed the face of affairs. Charles had quitted Madrid to rejoin his wife, escorted by 2000 cavalry, who would have been of more service with the army. Stanhope was likewise forced to evacuate the capital, and was cut off by Vendôme in the small town of Brihuega, and compelled to surrender with his whole force. A few days later the German general, Stahremberg, was defeated at Villaviciosa, and in a few weeks the cause of Charles was hopeless.

The desperate state of his affairs made peace seem more attainable; as it was no longer possible for the allies to insist on the same terms when he was only recognized in one or two small towns, as they thought they had a right to demand when he was master of half the kingdom; and the new ministers in England were resolved to make peace. There was living in London a French abbé, named Gautier, who, in January, 1711, crossed over to Paris, and, calling on Torcy, the French secretary, asked him whether he wished for peace; for, if he did, he brought him the means of concluding it. "To ask us if we wish for peace," replied Torcy, "is asking a dying man whether he wishes to be well again." Gautier then explained that he was authorized by St. John to ex-

press his desire for the termination of the war ; and shortly afterwards Prior, who had been lord Jersey's secretary, was sent with a more definite message. The success of the negotiations was greatly facilitated by the death of the emperor, who died in the spring, and by the election of the archduke Charles as his successor ; since it was evidently more objectionable to unite the crowns of Germany and Spain at once, than to run the distant risk of a similar union of those of France and Spain. At the same time the new ministers in England were strengthened by an attempt made by a profligate Frenchman, named Guiscard, to assassinate Harley in the queen's presence ; and they began more openly to attack the policy and characters of their predecessors.

The war was not suspended, though, owing to these events, it proceeded very languidly. Villars fortified lines, which reached from Montreuil to the Meuse, and, in boastful despatches to Paris, pronounced them the *ne plus ultra* of the allies ; but Marlborough turned them, and took up a strong position in the rear, and then, after taking Bouchain, led his army into winter-quarters.

It was his last exploit. Harley and St. John, who had lately been raised to the peerage by the titles of Oxford and Bolingbroke, had now arranged a congress of plenipotentiaries to be sent by the different contending powers to Utrecht by New Year's day, 1712 ; and, though lord Nottingham carried an address to the queen, in the house of lords, urging that no peace could be satisfactory which left Spain and the Indies under the dominion of a prince of the house of Bourbon, it only produced an evasive reply from the queen ; and, shortly afterwards, the prosecution of the war was put out of the question by the dismissal of the duke of Marlborough from all his employments.

The pretext for this shameful ingratitude towards the greatest subject that any sovereign had ever had, was more shameful than the act itself. A charge of embezzlement of the public money was brought against him ; and though he proved that all the sums, the receipt of which by him was censured as illegal, were only those which, by constant precedent, had been considered the regular and lawful perquisites of the commander-in-chief, and though he also asserted, what there was every reason to believe, that he had expended them wholly in the public service, for the procuring intelligence of the enemy's motions, in which no one ever was better served, or more successful, a committee of the house of commons reported that he had corruptly appropriated large sums of the public money, and the attorney-general was ordered to institute a suit against him for their recovery. As Mr. Walpole, the secretary at war, had owed his position in some degree to Marlborough's recommendation, he was now involved in his fall. A charge of

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corruption, not better founded than that on which Marlborough had been condemned, was brought against him, he was also pronounced guilty by the house of commons, and expelled from parliament.

The injustice to individuals was bad enough; but the assault which the ministers proceeded to make upon the constitution, was far more pernicious in principle. The lords were not inclined to imitate the subservience of the commons, but, on the contrary, showed a resolution to adhere to the Whigs; and Oxford and Bolingbroke resolved to obviate the danger of a majority against them in the upper house by a creation of new peers sufficient to turn the scale in their favour. Twelve were made and introduced into the house on the same day. The lovers of the constitution were silent with indignant grief; the wits ridiculed the new nobles, and asked them if they voted by their foreman; but a fatal precedent was thus attempted to be established, which, however, no succeeding minister has been wicked enough to follow, and but one desperate enough even to contemplate for a moment.

Another measure which the ministers had carried a short time before, if not an inroad on the principles of the constitution, was yet an innovation which would have been of great importance if it had not been evaded in practice. A bill was passed making the possession of landed property, to an amount which in those days was not inconsiderable,* essential as a qualification for a seat in parliament. The design of the measure was manifestly to exclude the commercial interests from any share in the government. But gold which can pierce through a king's guards, and burst asunder rocks,† can force its way also through an act of parliament; and the ingenuity of lawyers soon contrived a manufacture of fictitious qualifications which, though they conferred no real property, satisfied the provisions of the law, which was thus deprived of the impolitic and mischievous power intended by it, and remained practically inoperative, till in the present reign a conviction of its inefficiency led all parties to concur in its repeal.

The next object of attack was a treaty which the late ministers had made with the Dutch, they guaranteeing the Protestant succession in England, and the English securing them the possession of certain towns on their frontiers as a permanent barrier against Spain and France. It was urged that it was a disgrace to us to seem to require the guarantee of any other nation for the maintenance of our own government, the barrier promised to the Dutch was denounced as injurious to our own interests, and resolutions

* The qualification was £300 a year for a member for a borough, £600 a year for a knight of the shire.

† Aureum per medios in satellites
Et perrumpere amat saxa.

were passed condemning the treaty, censuring lord Townsend, who had signed it, and pronouncing a memorial, which the Dutch estates presented in support of it, a malicious and libellous paper.

In spite of the negotiations at Utrecht, hostilities were still carried on in Flanders, where the duke of Ormond had succeeded to Marlborough's command. Eugene took one or two towns, but Villars surprised lord Albemarle (one of the most undeserving of the favourites of William III.) at Denain, defeated him, and took him prisoner; and this advantage, the first which the French had gained for many years, enabled the marshal to recover Douay and other fortresses which had been taken by the allies. These were the last events of the war. In August an armistice was signed, and, after a long negotiation, peace was finally concluded in April, 1713.

By the peace of Utrecht Philip was established as king of Spain and of the Spanish settlements in America. The emperor obtained Milan, Naples, and the Spanish Netherlands. The states of Holland acquired a sufficient barrier. England got Newfoundland and other settlements on the coast of North America, and Louis acknowledged the queen and the principle of the Protestant succession. There were also other conditions of minor importance. Scarcely any treaty has been more vilified by posterity, and yet there are few which are further from affording solid grounds for reproach. It did not, indeed, attain all the objects originally proposed in the formation of the grand alliance. But the election of the archduke to the empire had of itself altered the complexion of affairs so greatly, that the literal attainment of those objects had ceased to be desirable. It is true that the advantages obtained from France hardly corresponded to the grandeur of the triumphs which had been gained over her; but the glory of those triumphs and the increased power of England from her increased renown remained; her enemy was in a great degree disarmed by his recognition of her government, and it may fairly be argued that it is a sounder policy to grant a defeated enemy terms in which he may contentedly acquiesce, than to impose upon him conditions, submission to which he ever feels as a degradation, and from which he will be always on the watch to emancipate himself. If, in this case, as in all practical matters, we are to judge of the tree by its fruits, we may fairly infer from the long tranquillity which Europe enjoyed after the conclusion of this peace, that its provisions, which no country sought to disturb, were in the main just and reasonable, and, as such, beneficial to Europe.

The last year of this eventful reign was greatly disturbed by intrigues and dissensions at home. The Scotch took so much umbrage at the extension of some of the English taxes to Scotland,

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that they declared the conditions of the union violated; and a formal motion was made in the house of lords for its dissolution; while, so bitter had become the strife between the two parties which in England were contending for the government, that this most suicidal motion was countenanced by lord Somers, whose conduct on this occasion was the only blemish in a life of singular virtue, wisdom, and usefulness. The ministry was also divided against itself. Bolingbroke, a man of far greater talents, and of even less principle than Oxford, was eager to supplant him as first minister; he sought to secure the favour of the High Church party by a most iniquitous and oppressive bill, called the schism act, intended entirely to crush the Dissenters, and to gain the exclusive favour of the queen by promoting the design, which he believed her to cherish, of securing the succession to her brother, the prince of Wales, instead of to the elector of Hanover. The princess Sophia had lately died, and the queen was known to have taken personal offence at the desire of the elector to obtain an invitation for his son, who had lately been created duke of Cambridge, to reside in England, and at his subsequent demand of a writ requiring him to take his seat in parliament as a British peer. Anne wavered; at one time, on a discovery being made that some Irish officers were enlisting men for the service of the Pretender, she consented to a resolution of the parliament offering a large reward for his apprehension, if he should land in her dominions; at other times her predominant feeling was evidently a strong preference for him over his rival, which was taken advantage of by Bolingbroke to increase his own favour; and at last he so far succeeded, that on July the 27th, 1714, Oxford was deprived of his office as lord treasurer.

Bolingbroke now thought his victory secure, and began to make arrangements for the formation of a new ministry; but the agitation into which the queen had been thrown proved too much for her health, which had long been in a very precarious state, and two days afterwards it was known that she was dying. The privy council met in great anxiety, and the Whig leaders, inspired by the urgent necessity of the case, acted with unexpected energy. They proposed a resolution that the queen should be at once requested to fill up the vacant office of lord treasurer, and that the council should recommend to her the duke of Shrewsbury as the fittest person for that office. Bolingbroke and his partisans were too much taken by surprise to resist the proposition. A deputation from the council waited on the queen to report to her majesty the resolution to which they had come, and she at once delivered the white staff, the badge of the coveted office, to the duke of Shrewsbury. An express was sent over to Hanover to request the

elector's instant presence in England, and on the first of August the queen died, in the fiftieth year of her age, and the thirteenth of her reign.

Since the time of the third Edward no reign in English history had been distinguished by such a series of military triumphs as that which had now terminated; yet there never was a sovereign whose personal character less contributed to the glories of her reign than Anne. The spiteful and calumnious assertion of the poet, that

"Most women have no characters at all,"

was more true of the deceased queen than of the generality of that sex which is the delight and ornament of every home, the best adviser of many, the heightener of man's joys, his relief in perplexity, his comfort in distress. And even Anne, though destitute of any thing like activity, resolution, or energy, had some amiable qualities. She was an affectionate and faithful wife and mother, a kind friend, and, if her affability led her to forget the proper dignity of her station, it is at least more pardonable than the arrogant disdain of their fellow-creatures which characterized the conduct of more than one of her contemporary sovereigns.

Nor were the triumphs of Anne's reign confined to the sword. It has often been called the Golden Age of English Literature; and, though perhaps it may be found not quite to deserve so high a panegyric, nor to have produced writers, as a body, equal to those of the present century, yet it may well be proud of Bolingbroke, perhaps the greatest orator of our country, and certainly one of the most powerful and eloquent of political writers; of Addison, whose exquisite liveliness of fancy was set off with the purest taste, and a correct elegance of language which has never been surpassed, and who still more deserves the grateful admiration of posterity, because, in a gross and scoffing age, his pen was always enlisted in the cause of religion and virtue; so that, according to the beautiful panegyric of a succeeding moralist, he taught virtue not to be ashamed, and even turned many to righteousness; of Defoe, the historian of the Plague and of the Union, and still more universally known as the author of the tale which has fascinated the childhood of every reader, and which has not lost its attraction for those of more mature age, "Robinson Crusoe;" of Swift, whose writings, though often defaced by shameless scurrility, and still more discreditable grossness, yet exhibit a vigour of genius, and an idiomatic mastery over the language, which place him high among our English classics; though, by a singular caprice of fortune, he owes the greater part of his celebrity at the present day to his "Gulliver's Travels," which, designed as a political satire for a temporary purpose, has become a favourite book of numbers,

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who devour it as an amusing tale, in utter disregard or ignorance of its original object. In a different line of literature, Bentley, now in the prime of life, was raising the character of English scholarship by a combination of profound learning and unrivalled critical acuteness, which places him at the head of all the scholars of modern Europe; and Pope, the most harmonious of poets, was beginning to smooth the hitherto somewhat rugged cadences of English verse into rhythm as well suited to enchant the ear, as the playful fancy which breathed throughout it with ever-varying imagery was calculated to delight the sense; and, though not equal to Dryden, in either the loftiness of his ideas, or in the exuberant richness of his language, was laying the foundation of a school which lasted till the end of the century, and which still finds numerous admirers, and some not altogether unsuccessful disciples.

CHAPTER LIII.

GEORGE I.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperor.</i>	A.D.	<i>Sweden.</i>	A.D.	<i>Prussia.</i>	A.D.
Charles VI.		Charles XII.		Frederic II.	
<i>France.</i>		Ulrica . . .	1718		
Louis XIV.		<i>Russia.</i>		<i>Popes.</i>	
Louis XV. . .	1715	Peter.		Clement XI.	
<i>Spain.</i>		Catherine I. .	1625	Innocent XIII. .	1721
Philip V.				Benedict XIII. .	1724

A.D.
1714—
1715.

IN spite of all the intrigues which had been set on foot, the new king succeeded to the throne as peaceably as any of its previous possessors. He was proclaimed by the style of George I. in all the principal cities in England, and was promptly acknowledged by Louis XIV. and the other continental sovereigns. Till he reached England the affairs of the kingdom were administered by a council of state; and, on his arrival, in the middle of September, he appointed a new ministry, taken, as was natural, entirely from the Whig party. The duke of Shrewsbury resigned the office of lord treasurer, which was put in commission with lord Halifax at the head of the Board; lord Townsend and general Stanhope became the secretaries of state, Townsend being considered the prime minister; his brother-in-law, Mr. Walpole, was made paymaster-general; and lord Cowper resumed the seals as lord chancellor.

When the new parliament met in March of the ensuing year, the new ministers showed that they were not content with the acquisition of power themselves, without attacking, not only the wisdom, but also the loyalty of their predecessors; and following the evil example set by those ministers in the prosecution of Marlborough and Walpole, prepared to impeach Oxford, Bolingbroke, and Ormond of high treason. Such a measure was neither wise nor just: it was not wise, since it was a flagrant departure from their usual moderation, a virtue which was never more necessary than now, when so many were disposed to espouse the cause of a pretender to the crown, and since it greatly prevented that union of parties which was indispensable to secure the tranquillity of the kingdom; and it was not just, since no ingenuity of the lawyers could concoct a charge against them which would in the least sustain such a prosecution. It would have received its best condemnation in its total failure, had it not been for the weakness of Ormond and Bolingbroke, who fled from the country, and thus gave their enemies a plausible pretext for treating them as guilty by their own confession, and passing acts of attainder against them. Oxford refused to fly, and was committed to the Tower. The charges against him were founded on his conduct in effecting the peace of Utrecht, which, as was observed in defence of him and his colleagues by sir W. Wyndham, had been approved of by two successive parliaments; but so plainly did the ministers themselves see their inability to support the charges by evidence, or to show that, if ever so fully established, they amounted to treason, that they took no steps to bring him to trial till two years afterwards, and then took advantage of a dispute between the two houses of parliament, as to the order in which the counts for high treason and those only charging misdemeanour should be proceeded with, to drop the prosecution altogether, and Oxford was released from confinement.

In the spring lord Halifax died, and was succeeded in his office by Mr., afterwards sir Robert Walpole, who combined with it that of chancellor of the exchequer; and his promotion added no small strength to the king's government, which was beginning to stand in need of additional support; for George had not yet been a twelvemonth king before he had become very generally unpopular. He was at an age when a man does not easily adapt himself to the habits and ideas of a foreign nation; he was wholly ignorant of our language, and he was accompanied by a swarm of ungracious and covetous favourites, and by a pair of mistresses of complete though different ugliness, one ridiculed for her unwieldy grossness, the other for her hungry-looking emaciation, and both detested for their rapacity. He himself was, generally speaking, of an inoffensive and forgiving disposition, hating no one with any great vehemence,

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except his wife and his son, his enmity to whom was presently the cause of his parting with his new minister.

He had great need, at this time, of able advisers. Bolingbroke, exasperated by the act of attainder which had been passed against him, had offered his services to the Pretender, had been named his secretary of state, and was now busy in preparing to effect an insurrection in his favour. Louis felt himself precluded by his recognition of George from openly assisting him, though he promised as great supplies of arms and money as could be afforded in secret; but the Jacobites in England insisted upon the aid of a body of French troops as indispensable to the success of an invasion. Whether Bolingbroke would have been able to overcome the scruples of Louis, and to procure such open aid, is uncertain, for the old king's strength, which had long been failing, gave way in the course of August, and on the 1st of September, 1715, he died; leaving his kingdom to a youthful grandson, with the duke of Orleans as regent.

Before, however, the news of his death could reach Scotland, the earl of Mar had raised the standard of the Stuarts in the Highlands; and the Pretender, though he had determined to postpone any such enterprise, on hearing the extent to which his too faithful follower had committed himself, determined on joining him. At the same time that he quitted Paris, the duke of Ormond crossed over to the Devonshire coast, hoping to find the western counties ready to take up arms for his cause. But Ormond's plans had been betrayed, and he found himself, for the sake of his own safety, compelled to return to Paris, without effecting a landing. In Scotland, however, the Pretender was proclaimed by the title of James VIII. in several of the principal cities. The expectation of his arrival excited great enthusiasm for his cause among the Highland chieftains, and in a short time Mar found himself at the head of about 5000 men; while the duke of Argyll, to whom the government had entrusted the chief command, had scarcely a fourth of that number around the king's standard. But Mar, though skilful in conciliating and stimulating wavering friends, or in any other task requiring temper and address, was wholly destitute of military ability. He lingered at Perth till November, wasting his strength by dividing his forces for different enterprises, most of which failed, instead of concentrating the whole in one well-directed enterprise.

Meantime, the English government were not wanting to the emergency. They exerted all their energy to supply Argyll with reinforcements, and, with a well-judged exhibition of rigour, seized and confined several persons of great influence, whom they had reason to suspect of having been privy to, or of favouring the

insurrection. They also sent down general Carpenter, an officer of high character, to secure the northern English counties, they raised several new regiments, and applied to the Dutch for an aid of 6000 men, which that nation was bound by the barrier treaty to furnish in the event of such a contingency as had now arisen. General Wills, another skilful officer, was sent to Lancashire, and he and Carpenter combined their forces in an attack on Preston, which brigadier McIntosh, commanding a detachment of Mar's army, had lately seized, having, after one or two failures in other quarters, descended into Lancashire, where he was joined by a large body of the Roman Catholic gentry, headed by Mr. Forster and lord Derwentwater. Forster had a commission from the Pretender to act as his general in England; but he proved entirely unfit for such a charge, and surrendered at the first appearance of Wills and Carpenter in front of the town. The very same day, the 13th of November, Mar fought the only battle that took place, with Argyll, at Sheriffmuir, near Dumblane. The Jacobite force nearly trebled that of their enemies; but their superiority in numbers did not make up for the inferiority of their leader's skill. The fortune of the day was not unevenly balanced: Argyll with his cavalry routed Mar's left wing, and drove them from the field; but when he had successfully terminated the struggle in that quarter, he found his own left cut to pieces by the Highlanders; and though he rallied his broken forces with great resolution, his loss had been so great, and the troops that remained were so exhausted, that he was completely at the mercy of Mar, who, by a resolute charge, might have annihilated his army. But Mar, though not destitute of passive courage, was deficient in energy. It was in vain that the Highland chieftains prayed to him to issue orders for a final attack. "Oh, for one hour of Dundee!" cried the indignant Gordon, when the earl pronounced his decision to retreat; but the order was obeyed, and the rebellion was over. He retired from the field leaving several colours, and guns, and 200 prisoners in the hands of the Royalists.

James himself had not yet reached Scotland. He had at first delayed his departure from France in compliance with the advice of his English partisans; and afterwards, when he arrived on the Breton coast, he found it so watched by English vessels, that it was impossible for him to sail from thence. He rode from St. Malo to Dunkirk, and not having heard of the late battle, embarked on board a small sloop, and landed at Peterhead on the 22nd of December. It was soon apparent, however, that he had no means of acting with effect, nor judgment and energy calculated for such an enterprise, even if he had possessed the means. After much deliberation, he and his council decided on fortifying Perth; but,

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hearing that general Cadogan (one of Marlborough's best officers), whom the government, distrusting Argyll's skill, or perhaps his fidelity, had sent down as his colleague, was advancing to attack it, he resolved on retreating; after a few days more, he gave up all hope of resistance; and with the full consent of those who remained behind, and who thought that they should more easily make terms with the government, when the departure of the leaders had proved that all idea of resistance was at an end, the prince and Mar embarked for France, where they arrived in safety after a short voyage.

The government at once proceeded to take vengeance on those who were in their power. Many, who had been taken with arms in their hands, had been shot by sentence of courts-martial; but the noblemen were conducted to London to be tried by their peers. The earls of Derwentwater, Nithisdale, and Carnwath, lord Kenmuir, lord Widdrington, and lord Nairn, pleaded guilty. Lord Wintown was tried and convicted; but the government was not eager for blood; Carnwath, Widdrington, and Nairn were reprieved; Nithisdale and Wintown escaped; and lord Derwentwater and lord Kenmure were the only men of rank executed; bills of attainder were also passed against lord Mar, and others who had fled, and, within the short space of four months, tranquillity was completely restored.

The ministers naturally endeavoured to provide against the recurrence of such a danger; but it is a singular proof of the bigoted spirit of the age, that Stanhope and Walpole, though generally the most moderate, tolerant, and humane of men, could find no better expedient than enacting laws of additional severity against the Roman Catholics, providing even for the punishment of such as, being Roman Catholics, should enlist in the king's service; conduct which one would suppose the most ordinary prudence would have been desirous to encourage. A far more sagacious and efficacious measure was the introduction of a bill to extend the duration of parliaments to seven years. It had been fixed at three years in king William's reign; but the present parliament had now sat half its time, and it was felt that a dissolution would be unsafe in the present excited state of the country. The bill was carried by large majorities in both houses, and has continued the law of the land ever since. A treaty also, which Stanhope negotiated with France, cut off the Pretender from any future hopes of assistance from that country, and drove him to rely on the aid of Spain and of Sweden, whose sovereign, Charles XII., had taken violent offence at king George, whose objects, as elector of Hanover, were at variance with some of Charles's schemes. A plan was actually being formed, according to which Charles was to invade Scotland,

in order to restore the Pretender, and his ambassador, count Gyllenborg, was in active communication with the English Jacobites, when full information of his proceedings reached the ministers, who arrested him, seized all his papers, and published them as the best justification of their conduct in thus violating the ordinary law of nations; and, as Charles was killed shortly afterwards, all danger from that quarter was at an end for ever.

But, while the ministry was thus successful abroad, it was divided by private dissension, which at last ended in Townsend and Walpole quitting it, and in lord Sunderland, son of the minister of James II., becoming first lord of the treasury. The king had conceived a prejudice against Townsend, both from his uncourtly manner and from his open assertion of the rights of the prince of Wales to the regency during the occasional absences of the king in Germany, and Stanhope took advantage of that feeling to engross the chief authority, which, however, in many respects, he exerted with great judgment. He was not as well acquainted with finance as Walpole, but, as an old soldier, he was inclined to vigorous measures, and the promptitude with which he sent a fleet into the Mediterranean to counteract the designs of cardinal Alberoni, the Spanish minister, was very beneficial to the country and to Europe. Alberoni had restored the power and wealth of Spain in a most surprising manner; and, his ambition increasing with the means of gratifying it, he began to cherish plans of humbling the emperor, who had not yet acknowledged Philip as king of Spain, and the pope, whom he looked upon as a partisan of the emperor. With these views he sent forth an armament, such as had not left a Spanish harbour for near a century and a half, into the Mediterranean, with orders to attack Sicily. Stanhope, willing to avoid war, though resolute not to fail in the duty of England towards her allies, went himself to Spain, and revealed to Alberoni the general purport of a treaty just signed by England, France, the empire, and Holland; but Alberoni relied on the irresistible strength of his expedition, and would not listen to the English minister. The Spaniards had taken Palermo, and were making, apparently, rapid progress in the reduction of the island of Sicily, when sir George Byng, at the head of the English fleet, superior in weight of metal, though inferior in number to that of the Spaniards, appeared off Messina: a battle ensued, in which the Spanish fleet was almost destroyed; yet it was not till the beginning of the next year, 1719, that any declaration of war against Spain was made by England; and after war was declared no action of equal importance took place. Alberoni indeed openly espoused the cause of the Pretender, and aided an expedition for his restoration, which was dispersed by a storm, so that only two vessels, with two or three companies of soldiers, ever reached

A.D. 1719.

the Scottish coast, where they were easily defeated by Carpenter but at last Alberoni was dismissed from his offices, and Philip announced his accession to the quadruple alliance, as the treaty was called, which Stanhope had lately communicated to his minister, and peace was restored to Europe.

In the mean time Stanhope, who had lately been created lord Stanhope, had conducted the government generally with great moderation and wisdom. The army was greatly reduced; the greater part of those implicated in the late rebellion were pardoned, and with a wisdom greatly beyond his age, he endeavoured to establish principles of religious toleration; he repealed the most severe clauses of Bolingbroke's schism act, and would have abrogated the test and corporation act if the parliament would have suffered it. He even proposed, what was a far more perilous measure in the general temper of the kingdom, to relieve the Roman Catholics from some of the laws which pressed most heavily upon them; but he was unable to carry all his benevolent and wise projects into effect. Still the measure which he did succeed in passing, with those others which he proposed, eminently entitle him to the praise of being one of the first statesmen in Europe who ever practically acknowledged the rights of every sect of Christians to equal political rights and privileges.

It would have been well if all his designs had been conceived with equal wisdom; but, at the end of 1719, he brought forward a bill, called the peerage bill, to limit the power of the crown to increase the existing number of the peerage by more than six new creations. It is needless to point out how destructive such a measure would have proved, not only of the legitimate prerogative of the crown, but also of the proper dignity and authority of the house of lords. Yet the opposition was at first disinclined to resist it, and was only roused to such a resolution by the shrewd eloquence of Walpole, who foresaw how unpopular it must be with every class below the peerage, which was thus to be practically cut off from the attainment of an honour, which even the humblest of the educated classes had hitherto seen, by repeated examples, to be within the reach of their children. He made a splendid speech against the bill in the commons, and it was thrown out by a great majority.

This defeat opened Stanhope's eyes to the impolicy of persevering in the exclusion of so able a man, and he accordingly made overtures for a reconciliation with Walpole and Townsend, who rejoined his ministry, though not at first in such prominent offices as those which they had previously held. Townsend became president of the council, and Walpole paymaster of the forces. And the time was at hand when his financial abilities became more than ever

A.D. 1719.

indispensable to the government. France had been lately excited almost to madness by the spirit of speculation awakened by the schemes of Law, a Scotchman, who, for a while, had had the finances of that country entrusted to his management; and, though wide-spread confusion and ruin had been the ultimate result of them, the contagion reached across the Channel, affecting our more sober countrymen, and the consequences were seen in the transaction known ever since as the South Sea Bubble.

Some years before, Harley had incorporated the national creditors into a company, to which he gave the exclusive right of trading to what was called the South Sea, that is, to the Spanish possessions in America; and in the preceding year Sunderland and Aislachie, the chancellor of the exchequer, at the suggestion of sir John Blunt, the chairman of the company, proposed to make a new agreement with it, with the object of reducing the interest to be paid on the national debt, and of gradually getting rid of the debt altogether, by persuading the public creditor to exchange his claim on the nation for shares in the company. Walpole, who had not yet become reconciled to the ministry, pronounced the whole scheme a delusion; but he stood almost alone in his opinion, and the minister's plan was formally sanctioned by parliament. It immediately became his object to exaggerate the expected profits to be derived by the company, in order to tempt the public to buy the shares, and the public were as eager to be imposed upon. In a short time the price of a hundred pound share rose to a thousand pounds. Even at that price intending purchasers could hardly find sellers; and the apparent success of the company gave rise to numberless other companies with the most ridiculous or impracticable objects. The Exchange was crowded with speculators of every age, sex, and profession; some eager to buy shares in a company to make salt-water fresh; others desirous to aid in the fixing of quicksilver, or the discovery of perpetual motion; one company flourished for some weeks by a proposal to purchase the right of shaving those who had fine heads of hair, and establishing a monopoly of periwigs; another, equally characteristic, but, one would have thought, more unnecessary, was to enrich its proprietors by importing a stock of large Spanish jackasses. The South Sea Company tried to discredit such formidable rivals; but, in so doing, aroused a spirit of suspicion which became fatal to themselves. At last it began to be seen that no speculation could pay the profits which had been expected from the South Sea Company; its stock fell, and, in a few weeks, thousands of families were reduced to beggary.

The indignation, and the cry for vengeance on those who had thus deluded the people, was universal. Some measure to meet

A.D. 1720.

the public distress was necessary, and, by universal consent, the preparation of it was entrusted to Walpole, who now returned to the exchequer; while, at the same time, a singular accident removed the only minister whose rivalry he had any reason to dread. Lord Stanhope himself was one of the few men in the kingdom who had kept wholly aloof from all transactions with the company; yet, as the chief member of the ministry, he did not altogether escape from the attacks levelled at his colleagues, and, on one occasion, the duke of Wharton assailed the whole ministry with such fury, that Stanhope was provoked to equal violence, and his passion brought on a fit of apoplexy of which he died the next day, and was succeeded as secretary of state by lord Townsend. Walpole was very successful in restoring public credit, and in saving the proprietors of the South Sea Company from total ruin; but he could not control the parliament, or prevent them from proceeding against the directors in a manner which exhibited a total disregard of law, and even of common justice. A committee was appointed to investigate the whole affairs of the company, and they reported with truth that a great quantity of fictitious stock had been created, that in this fraud Aislachie, Sunderland, and Craggs, one of the secretaries of state, and others of the inferior ministers, had been large partakers, while the king's mistresses had received large bribes to forward the scheme by their influence. Craggs died suddenly of the small-pox, Aislachie was convicted and sent to the Tower, Sunderland was acquitted, but was forced to resign the treasury, and he was succeeded in that office by Walpole, whose long and useful administration dates from this period. Against the directors, as a body, a bill of intolerable severity, disabling them from ever sitting in parliament, and confiscating all their property, which amounted in value to 2,000,000*l.* of money, was passed almost unanimously; one of its advocates admitting that there was no law in existence by which they could be punished, but urging that such extraordinary crimes as theirs called for extraordinary punishments.

The distress and discontent caused by these events revived the hopes of the Jacobites, who had also been greatly encouraged by the birth of a son to the Pretender, who was born at Rome, at Christmas, 1720, and received the name of Charles Edward. They now formed the design of inducing James to raise a force of 5000 men on the Continent, and to invade England, during the expected absence of the king on his autumnal visit to Hanover. Their plot was betrayed to Walpole, who at once arrested lord North, lord Orrery, the duke of Norfolk, bishop Atterbury, and several of the subordinate agents. Of these last one, a barrister named Lyster, was executed, and others were sentenced to imprisonment during

the king's pleasure, and to confiscation of their property. The lay noblemen were released, for want of any sufficient evidence to justify their impeachment; and the same reason ought to have obtained the liberation of Atterbury, though he was undoubtedly guilty. He was confined in the Tower, and treated with great severity, not being allowed even to see his daughter, except in the presence of an officer of the prison. Everything that was sent from or to him was rigorously examined. Even a pigeon-pie was opened to see if it held anything beyond its legitimate contents. "This being," as Pope observed, "the first time that dead pigeons had been suspected of carrying intelligence." At last, as it was certain that it would not be possible to procure his conviction according to law, the ministers brought in a bill of pains and penalties to deprive him of his bishopric, and banish him from the country. Such measures are always unjustifiable and pernicious. Walpole may be partly justified on this occasion by the consideration that preceding ministers would in general have been less moderate, and would probably have proposed a bill of attainder, such as had been passed against sir John Fenwick, and which he would have had no difficulty in carrying; and partly forgiven, from the pleasing reflection that neither he, at any future time, nor any succeeding minister, ever had recourse to a similar proceeding, but that this is the last instance in our history of such a violation of the legal and constitutional privileges of an Englishman.

The same day that Atterbury crossed the Channel, as a banished man, Bolingbroke returned to England, having procured his pardon. For some reason, with which we are unacquainted, James, on his return from Scotland, in 1716, had dismissed him from his office of secretary of state, and from that time Bolingbroke had broken off all connexion with the Jacobite party, and had been continually endeavouring to procure leave to return to England. For some time he met with no success, till he began to bribe the duchess of Kendal, the most greedy and the most influential of the king's mistresses. Walpole, however, could not be prevailed upon to allow him to receive an entire pardon. He did not object to his return, or to the restoration of his estates, but steadily refused the repeal of that portion of the act of attainder, which deprived him of his seat in the house of lords. With this modified pardon Bolingbroke was obliged to be satisfied. It passed the great seal in May, 1723; and he returned, to spend fruitless years in intriguing against the minister, against whom, to the end of his life, he entertained more resentment for what had been refused than gratitude for what had been granted.

Fresh divisions arose in the cabinet. Craggs had been succeeded

A.D. 1724.

in his office of secretary of state by lord Carteret, a man of extraordinary genius for political affairs, of the most universal learning and information, and of incorruptible honesty, who only wanted perseverance and steadiness of resolution to become one of the greatest ministers who ever directed the energies of this country. Unhappily his love of ease and pleasure was fatal to his greatness; and, during the greater part of his career, kept him in situations subordinate to those occupied by men of far inferior abilities. He was especially acceptable to the king, as the only one of his cabinet who could converse with him in German. George understood no English, Walpole no French; and the communication between them was kept up in Latin, which the minister had forgotten, and with which the king had never had more than a very indifferent acquaintance; but Carteret was familiar with almost every language in Europe; and this accomplishment naturally added greatly to his influence with foreign courts, and to his favour with his master. Of this favour Walpole became jealous. His great, I had almost said, his only fault as a minister was his desire to engross all power to himself, a feeling which subsequently led him to quarrel with even his brother-in-law, lord Townsend, and which now determined him to remove Carteret from an office which placed him in such daily communication with the king. Carteret struggled to retain his place, and secured the interest of lady Darlington; but Walpole was supported by the weightier favour of the duchess of Kendal, and prevailed. Carteret was removed to the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland; and the duke of Newcastle, too well satisfied with the name of office to be solicitous about exercising the power of it, succeeded him as secretary of state.

It was in the autumn of 1724 that lord Carteret arrived in Ireland, and found the whole island in a ferment, caused by a patent which had lately been granted to a proprietor of iron-works, named Wood, to coin copper money for the use of that island. The want of a sufficient copper coinage had been producing great difficulty; and Wood's offer was gladly accepted by Walpole. It was clearly calculated to be very beneficial to Ireland. The new coinage was unimpeachable in every point; but the Irish privy council was offended at not having been consulted. The grant of the patent was unpopular among the common people, chiefly because Wood was not an Irishman. The Irish parliament passed violent addresses to the king, begging him to cancel the patent, on the ground that Wood had not complied with the conditions mentioned in it, an assertion entirely false. Swift, eager to harass the ministry, and never scrupulous about the truth of his assertions, attacked Wood and his halfpence in a series of letters, under the assumed signature of M. B., a draper of Dublin, and known ever since as the Draper's

letters, in which the most lively wit, and consummate artfulness of argument, are mingled with the most audacious exaggeration, and the whole is set off by the most vigorous English, which attracts readers even at the present day, who can hardly avoid forgetting their contempt for the man in their admiration of the author. Carteret found himself unable to allay the storm. He instituted a prosecution against the printer of the letters; but the grand jury refused to find a true bill; and at last the ministers were forced to cancel the patent, and to make Wood a pecuniary compensation.

Troubles at the same time broke out in Scotland, from the impatience of taxation so often displayed by the Scots, who now broke into violent riots in order to procure the removal of an impost of sixpence on each barrel of beer. These riots were so formidable, that in Edinburgh and Glasgow they could only be put down by the military; but at last, by the prudence of Argyll's brother, the earl of Isla, whom Walpole chiefly trusted in his management of Scottish affairs, the discontents were appeased, and the whole island was united in undisturbed harmony and tranquillity, which was scarcely disturbed by the impeachment of lord Macclesfield, the lord chancellor, for corruption and speculation, of which he was unanimously convicted, and for which he was sentenced to pay a fine of 30,000*l*.

But the country was now threatened with a formidable war, which was only averted by the address and prudence of Walpole, the main object of whose administration was the preservation of peace. The king of Spain had been deeply offended by the violation of an agreement, according to which Louis XV. was to marry the infanta, Mary Anne, who, in consequence, had, at an early age, been sent to Paris for her education; but as she was still too young, the king was easily persuaded to prefer a bride of riper age, and to send the infanta back to Madrid. Philip, in his indignation, sought to engage England in an alliance against France; but as Walpole refused his proposals, Philip reconciled himself to the emperor, and endeavoured to form a league against both France and England, to which Russia also was inclined to accede. Walpole, however, succeeded in forming an alliance with France and Russia, which, from having been signed at Hanover, in the autumn of 1725, is known by the name of the treaty of Hanover. The emperor was forced to own that the project of attacking so powerful a confederacy must be abandoned, and laid aside his warlike preparations. In England the treaty was vehemently attacked by the opposition, as having been concluded chiefly with a view to Hanoverian interests, a charge for which there was no foundation in this instance. Large majorities in both houses approved of the

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treaty, and the funds, which had fallen greatly, rose to their former price as soon as peace was looked upon as secure.

Philip, however, still breathed war against England; and, though the emperor had begun to negotiate with the parties to the treaty of Hanover, which eventually led to his concluding a peace with them, Philip determined on making an attempt to recover Gibraltar, and, in February, 1727, sent an army to lay siege to that fortress. The besiegers, however, did no credit to themselves, and no damage to the place, and soon retired, after having lost half their numbers. The Spanish ambassador at Vienna even signed the preliminaries of peace with the English ambassador; but Philip refused to ratify them, though he made no further attempt to carry on the war with activity.

Yet, in spite all this success, Walpole's power was in danger of being undermined by the intrigues of Bolingbroke, who, by his bribes, had gained over the duchess of Kendal to persuade the king to dismiss him. But in the midst of these intrigues the king went to Hanover, and being suddenly seized with apoplexy, died in his carriage on the 10th of June.

George I. was not a sovereign of eminent talents, and he laboured under a great disadvantage when he came, at fifty-four years of age, to govern a country to which he had hitherto been a complete stranger; but he certainly deserves some credit for his discernment in choosing and supporting honest and able ministers, and very high praise for the humanity with which the leaders of the rebellion of 1715 were in general treated, and which is in a great degree to be ascribed to his personal good nature and humanity.

CHAPTER LIV.

GEORGE II.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Russia.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Prussia.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Charles VI.		Catharine I.		Frederic I.	
Charles VII.	1741	Peter II.	1727	Frederic II.	1740
Francis I.	1745	Anne	1730		
<i>France.</i>		John	1740	<i>Popes.</i>	
Louis XV.		Elizabeth	1741	Benedict XIII.	
<i>Spain.</i>				Clement XII.	1738
Philip V.		<i>Hungary & Bohemia.</i>		Benedict XIV.	1740
Ferdinand VI.	1745	Maria Teresa	1740	Clement XIII.	1758
Charles III.	1759				

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1727.

GEORGE II. was forty-four years old when he succeeded to the throne. In 1705 he had married Caroline of Anspach, a princess of great beauty and talent, by whom he had two sons, Frederic, prince of Wales, now twenty years of age, and William, the future duke of Cumberland, who was still a child; and also four daughters.

The news of the late king's death was conveyed by lord Townsend, who was in Germany, in a despatch to Walpole, who immediately repaired to Richmond to announce his accession to the new sovereign, but was greatly disappointed at finding that his own power was on the point of expiring. In reply to his inquiry whom his majesty would appoint to draw up the necessary speech to the privy council, the king named sir Spencer Compton, the speaker of the house of commons, which was, in effect, announcing his intention to make him the chief minister; but Compton was so ignorant of even the ordinary forms of business, that he had no idea how to execute his task, and himself solicited Walpole to undertake it for him; nor did he appear in any respect ambitious of so burdensome a charge as the government of the state: while the queen, who had learnt from her father-in-law to entertain the highest opinion of Walpole's abilities, took the earliest opportunity of pointing out to her husband the injury which it must cause to his affairs, to entrust them to one who had already made such a striking admission of his own incapacity. She added, too, that Walpole had expressed his intention of fixing the king's civil list and her own jointure at a much larger sum than Compton would

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venture to propose ; and, in a few days, it became known that Walpole was to continue at the head of the treasury, while Compton was compensated by a peerage with the title of lord Wilmington, and shortly afterwards with the presidency of the council.

If the king's first act was not very wise, his next was not very honest. His father had made a will, which was believed to contain a large legacy for the duchess of Kendal and lady Walsingham, who passed for the duchess's niece, but who was generally believed to be her daughter. This will archbishop Wake produced at the first council, and handed to the king, who, instead of opening it, walked out of the room and burnt it. It was also said that a duplicate of it had been deposited with the duke of Brunswick, and that he had been bribed to suppress it ; and the story respecting its contents was supposed to be confirmed by the fact of a large sum of money being paid to lord Chesterfield when he married lady Walsingham, and threatened to insist upon a legal investigation of all the circumstances of the transaction. Lady Suffolk, the mistress of George II., at a later period attempted to excuse his conduct, on the plea that his mother had formerly made a will, bequeathing all her personal property to him, and that that will had been destroyed by George I., who, therefore, had no right to the money which he had desired to convey to the duchess : but no such story had ever been heard in the lifetime of George I., and, even had it been true, it is plain that one fraud could be no justification of another. The truth is that, next to a fondness of war and military details, avarice was the ruling passion of the new sovereign, and certainly this most unkingly of vices never led to a more unkingly action than in this instance.

Walpole was now the more firmly fixed in office by the admitted inferiority of those who might have been his rivals ; and the government was also greatly strengthened by the personal popularity of the king, who, by discarding his father's German favourites and German mistresses, and by announcing that he intended to make no distinction between parties, had gained very general good will. The French government, too, was so anxious to cultivate a good understanding with him that it compelled the Pretender to quit Lorraine, where of late he had been residing, and, after a short sojourn at Avignon, to remove beyond the Alps, where it was plain that he was far less formidable to England ; and Walpole was therefore able to direct his chief attention to his negotiations with foreign states, with whom he was anxious to conclude a durable peace.

The king of Spain now accepted the preliminaries which his representative had signed at Vienna, though a definite conclusion of peace was delayed for some time by his eagerness to obtain the

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restitution of Gibraltar. The English ministers had not yet learned to appreciate the importance of that invaluable key to the Mediterranean. Lord Stanhope had been willing to restore it on receiving some merely nominal equivalent. Townsend and Carteret had subsequently entertained the same views, and had induced the late king to write a letter to Philip, promising to take the first favourable opportunity to obtain the consent of parliament to the restitution; but, happily, the nation in general did not share their opinion on the subject. In 1729 the parliament resolved "that they relied upon the king's preserving his undoubted right to Gibraltar and to Minorca;" and, at last, the Spaniards, finding their desires completely unattainable, abandoned them, and, in the November of the same year, concluded the treaty of Seville with England, France, and Holland, by which, among other provisions, the English trade with Spanish America was re-established, and compensation was made for previous injuries; while Philip, giving up all idea of recovering Gibraltar, contented himself with cutting off the communication between that fortress and the mainland by constructing the strong lines of St. Roque in its rear.

But, though the king was not ruled, nor the kingdom pillaged, as it had been in the late reign, by German favourites, German objects still occupied a leading place in the royal mind, and Walpole was too solicitous to preserve the king's favour to resist them as became an English minister. To gratify his sovereign he persuaded parliament to grant a large sum for maintaining several Hessian regiments, and concluded a treaty with the duke of Brunswick, securing a large annual subsidy to that prince on condition of his furnishing a body of 5000 troops, if he should be required to do so; nor could the opposition assemble more than a feeble minority to resist these unjustifiable votes; though, besides Shippen and Wyndham, whose influence was diminished by their notorious Jacobitism, they numbered among their leaders William Pulteney, a man of great wealth and influence, and of the most brilliant talents, who had formerly been a colleague and most intimate friend of Walpole, but who had been gradually estranged from him, and had been deprived of his office, though Walpole offered him a peerage, with the motive, as Pulteney believed, of removing him from the house of commons to a sphere where his rivalry would be less conspicuous and less dangerous. Pulteney, indignant at the treatment which he had received, allied himself with Bolingbroke; and, though never mingling in his intrigues with the enemies of his country, became the most formidable opponent of Walpole during the whole period of his administration. On more than one occasion Walpole tried to lure him back by the prospect of the post of secretary of state; but, though such a post would

have preserved his support for ever, it could not recover it, and Pulteney refused all the minister's offers; yet it deserves to be mentioned, as characteristic of the amiable characters of the two men, and as evidence of their real respect for each other's talents, that, though a parliamentary opposition had scarcely ever been carried on with more vehemence and apparent rancour, Pulteney more than once announcing the resolution of his party never to desist from their attacks till they had delivered Walpole up to the justice of the country, while Walpole, on his part, removed Pulteney from the privy council, and from the commission of the peace, it caused no disruption nor even diminution of their private friendship. They both still commonly sat on the same bench in the house. The leader of the opposition still asked favours for his friends from the minister, and even at the very moment when the division was taking place which consummated Walpole's fall and Pulteney's triumph, Pulteney complimented Walpole on the weighty eloquence of his last speech, and the two rivals, while the tellers were counting the votes, amused themselves with a bet about a line of Horace; Walpole lost, and tossed the guinea with a smile to Pulteney, who pocketed it with the remark that it was the first treasury money which he had had in his hands for a long time, and that he would take care it should be the last.

But in spite of this mutual private good will, the opposition of Pulteney and his party to Walpole's measures was unceasing. They attacked a bill which he brought forward to prevent English subjects from lending money to foreign powers. They attacked him more vehemently for not having taken care that the stipulation for the demolition of Dunkirk, made at the peace of Utrecht, should be fully complied with, though he proved to the satisfaction of the commons that there was no ground for such a complaint. They opposed his renewal of the charter to the East India Company, and, to embarrass him further, they brought forward a bill to disable all pensioners of the crown from having seats in parliament; yet none of their attacks diminished the confidence which the king reposed in him, nor weakened the resolution with which he adhered to the system of policy which he had marked out.

In the spring of 1730 the ministry lost some parliamentary power in the house of lords by the retirement of lord Townsend. It was attributed to differences of opinion between himself and Walpole in foreign politics, but more generally believed to be caused by Walpole's unwillingness to allow any of his colleagues power equal to his own; while he imputed it to Townsend's jealousy of himself, saying, that the firm had gone on very well while it was Townsend and Walpole, but had been broken up by its becoming Walpole and Townsend. This division, however, might have been

of serious consequence, had it not been for the magnanimity of Townsend, who, instead of going into opposition, retired altogether from public life, refusing even to attend a debate lest the feeling that he had been ill used might lead him to sanction measures of which his judgment disapproved. He was succeeded in his office of secretary of state by William Stanhope, lately created lord Harrington, who, in negotiating the treaty of Seville, had shown very eminent talents for diplomacy, and great knowledge of foreign affairs; while Mr. Pelham, the brother of the duke of Newcastle, and afterwards prime minister, became secretary at war.

Townsend's retirement, however, caused Walpole himself to take a more active part in foreign affairs than he had hitherto done; and the first fruits of his management were seen in the renewal of the alliance with Austria, which, in the opinion of many, had been rendered hopeless by the treaty of Seville. An able negotiator, Mr. Robinson, afterwards lord Grantham, was sent to Vienna, and in the spring of 1731 a treaty was signed, by which, in return for England's guarantee of the succession to the emperor's daughter, Maria Teresa, to her father's hereditary dominions, the emperor acceded to arrangements very favourable to the general commercial interests of England. Yet so ably was the whole negotiation managed, that it was concluded without any interruption to our understanding with France, though a cordial union with the two nations had long been supposed to be impracticable.

In 1733 Walpole brought forward two measures which encountered the fiercest opposition. Sixteen years before, he had, with the cordial consent of both houses, established a rule that the surplus taxes should form a sinking fund for the reduction of the national debt, and, though Pulteney had lately made some violent speeches in disparagement of the effects of that measure, which he maintained that Walpole had greatly exaggerated, yet it was admitted that, at the lowest computation, it had paid off above two millions and a half of the debt, and that the sum now annually available for that purpose amounted to 1,200,000*l.* a year. Of this sum Walpole now proposed to devote half a million to the current expenses of the year, and though Pulteney thundered with unusual vehemence against such a project, and though sir John Barnard, a merchant of great weight in the city of London, and in the house, and of the highest reputation for his knowledge of financial matters, pronounced that the author of such an expedient must deserve the curses of posterity, it was carried by a large majority. The country gentlemen supported it, as the only means of avoiding an increased land-tax; the holders of stock supported it, not wishing to be repaid at a time when the general prosperity of the country had reduced the rate of interest so greatly that the

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bank was lending money at three per cent. ; and many independent politicians supported it, from an opinion that the debt must, in the event of a fresh attempt of the Jacobites, unite the fundholders in defence of the government.

With his other measure he was less successful. The excise duties, first invented in the civil wars, had gradually become very productive from the increased consumption of excisable articles. As yet there were but a few things liable to this impost, but Walpole now proposed to add wine and tobacco to the list, urging, among other reasons, that such a step would prevent the enormous frauds which were practised on the revenue with respect to those luxuries ; and that, by being coupled with a system of warehousing for re-exportation, it would greatly increase the trade and importance of the port of London, while it would afford opportunity for a large remission of other taxes. Excise duties, however, had always been unpopular. The power given to revenue officers to enter the houses of individuals at their own pleasure, and to summon offenders before a magistrate, by whom they could be convicted and sentenced without the intervention of a jury, was always looked upon with alarm ; and Pulteney, Wyndham, and Barnard made such dexterous use of the popular feeling on the subject, that, though the minister still obtained a majority, the minority was swollen to a number which it had never before approached. The people out of doors were also excited to a vigorous resistance. Petitions were signed by great numbers of people in most of the chief towns. Pamphlets of great ability, and of still greater virulence, lent their aid to inflame the public mind. Riots were apprehended. The discontent was believed to have spread even to the army ; the colonel of one regiment declaring that, though he would answer for his men against the Pretender, he could not undertake for their acting against the opposers of the excise ; and, at last, Walpole, though still preserving his own belief, that, as he asserted some years afterwards, the scheme would have tended very much to the advantage of the state, yielded to public opinion, and withdrew the bill ; affirming, with as much wisdom as humanity, that no tax was worth levying by means of the sword, and setting an example to all future ministers of prudent deference to the general and fixed feeling of the nation, even while believing it, as he did believe it, to have been inflamed by artful men, and grounded on unreasonable prejudice.

Yet, while renouncing the measure itself with a good grace, he resolved to show his displeasure against those who, while professing to support him, or actually holding office, had contributed to encourage and to swell the numbers of the opposition. Lord Chesterfield had lately returned from the Hague, where he had been

ambassador, with the reputation of one of the most skilful diplomatists in Europe, and was now lord steward of the household; lord Churton and lord Burlington filled inferior posts about the court; the duke of Montrose, lord Marchmont, and lord Stair, enjoyed lucrative sinecures. Their offices and emoluments were taken away, and Walpole even proceeded to deprive the duke of Bolton and lord Cobham of their commissions as colonels of regiments. The deprivation of the civil offices was unobjectionable, but a different principle has now for many years prevailed with respect to military appointments, and it would not now be tolerated for a moment that those who never allow their political sentiments to interfere with the discharge of their duty, should be in danger of finding those sentiments made a plea for depriving them of the right to discharge that duty.

The joy of the people at the abandonment of the excise bill effaced from their minds their indignation against the minister for having proposed it; and though, as the present parliament was on the point of expiring, the opposition made one more attempt to gain popularity by bringing forward a measure for the repeal of the septennial act, it had no effect either in or out of the house, and the new election left both parties nearly in their former condition.

In the year 1736 Edinburgh was the scene of a singular riot, which has been raised to historical importance, by having afforded a subject for one of the most universally interesting works of that admirable writer, whose genius is one of the greatest glories of the present century.

After the execution of a smuggler of the name of Wilson, the populace, who did not look on his offence with any great disfavour, and who detested Porteous, the captain of the city guard, for his general cruelty, began to pelt the soldiers who guarded the scaffold, till Porteous, enraged, ordered his men to fire on the crowd, and set the example himself by taking a musket from of a private, and discharging it with deadly aim. For this act he was tried, convicted of murder, and condemned to death, but was reprieved by the government, who were, not unnaturally, unwilling to punish with such severity a deed which was prompted partly by the spirit of self-defence. But his reprieve created a feeling of absolute fury in Edinburgh, and on the night preceding the day which had been originally fixed for his death, an immense mob attacked the tolbooth or city goal, forced the doors, and hung Porteous to a dyer's pole, which they erected in the usual place of execution. The news of this outrage was received by queen Caroline, who, as usual, was discharging the duties of regent during the king's absence in Hanover, with the most excessive indignation, which

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was fully shared by her ministers. No promise of reward could procure the very slightest information as to its authors, though it was pretty clearly ascertained that some of them were of a station in life much superior to that to which they seemed to belong; but the Scotch members of both houses of parliament so unanimously withstood the first proposal of the English ministers, urged probably by the queen, to deprive the city of its charter, to destroy the city gates, and thus to mark the city and citizens with perpetual ignominy, that the bill brought in for that purpose was at last abandoned, and Walpole was content with disabling the provost, who had behaved with great weakness and remissness, from holding any office in future, and with imposing on the city a fine of 2000*l.* for the benefit of Porteous's widow.

Since the last election the opposition had gained great strength from the open accession of the prince of Wales to their side. During the late reign the present king had been on bad terms with his father; and now his son seemed determined to follow his example. He had never come to England till after his grandfather's death; and, after a time, had put himself forward as a patron of literature and of men of ability, in order to mark more strongly the difference between himself and the king, to whom learning and learned men were objects of dislike and contempt. The consequence was, that the most accomplished men of the day, such as Bolingbroke, Pulteney, Chesterfield, Carteret, and others, became the prince's chosen friends; and to this formidable phalanx had lately been added two young members of parliament, Mr. Lyttelton and Mr. William Pitt. The prince had been, some years before, very anxious to marry his cousin, the princess of Prussia, but this match was prevented by his father from his hatred to the king of Prussia, Frederic William; nor was it till the year 1736, that the king would consent to any marriage being arranged for him. In that year, however, he negotiated a match for him with the princess Augusta of Saxe Gotha, whose beauty, accomplishments, and virtues speedily gave her a great and durable influence over him, but did not tend to reconcile him to his father, against whom, on the contrary, his animosity was increased by the king's refusal to allow him an income of more than half the amount which he himself had received in a similar position. At last the whole kingdom was scandalized by an open quarrel between the father and son, in which it was impossible for either to behave worse than they did behave. The prince, in defiance of the remonstrances of many of his most sincere friends, permitted Pulteney to make a formal motion in the house of commons to address the king to settle 100,000*l.* a year on him. The king compelled the ministers to oppose the motion, though it would only have given the

prince what he himself had enjoyed. The prince, the very day that the princess was about to be confined, removed her from Hampton Court to St. James's without sending to either the king or queen any announcement of the expected birth of their grandchild. The king turned the prince out of St. James's Palace, and compelled the lords of the privy council to convey to him a message couched in terms of most unprincely severity to announce his pleasure on that subject. Walpole himself cannot be altogether acquitted, since it appears that, so far from endeavouring to soften the king's displeasure, he approved of the language which he held towards the prince; though it may be urged, in his defence, that the indomitable obstinacy of the king was so well known, that it must be very doubtful whether his most earnest remonstrances would have had any effect.

Yet, discreditable as this quarrel was to both the parties concerned, shrewd observers have considered that it tended in no small degree to the strengthening of the Brunswick dynasty, by opening to the discontented the prospect of a safer road to power than could have been afforded by the restoration of the Stuarts, in becoming adherents of the prince, whose succession, since the king's health was believed to be failing, seemed a not very distant event.

Fortune had another blow in store for Walpole, in the unexpected death of his steady friend the queen, who had long been afflicted with a complaint which, from thinking it of trivial importance, she forbore to mention to her physicians, but which suddenly assumed a dangerous character, and of which she died on the 20th of November, deservedly regretted by her husband and by the whole nation; and with her last breath recommending the king never to forget the merits of his minister, and entreating the minister never to desert the interests of the king.

The king, after no long time, consoled himself with a new mistress, or rather with bringing over to England one with whom he had previously been connected during his visits to Hanover, a Madame de Walmoden, whom he created countess of Yarmouth. In fact, though the court was more dull than in the time of Charles II., it was in no respect more moral or more decorous; and it was not the least of the benefits which the country derived from the reign of George III., that his example, and that of his queen, restored that respect for virtue and purity which for a long time had seemed entirely banished. But the queen's death greatly encouraged the opponents of the minister, though in the first divisions on which they ventured, he preserved his accustomed majorities. Their attacks upon him, however, increasing as they did in frequency, began to make some impression on the people at large; at last they seized on a topic on which it was easy to excite the public

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mind, always too willing to take a high tone with the Bourbon governments. The commercial treaties between England and Spain had not been very accurately drawn, and left more than one opening for disputes; while, at the same time, each nation undoubtedly exceeded the rights secured to them by those treaties. The English traders sought by smuggling to evade the restrictions imposed upon them; the Spanish revenue cruisers often insisted upon exercising their right of search in waters to which their power did not extend. The opposition made no mention of the British smugglers, but occupied parliament with incessant complaints of the injuries inflicted by the Spaniards on our traders; and, at last, produced before the house of commons a captain of a small trading vessel, named Jenkins, who declared that the Spaniards had boarded his vessel, and finding nothing contraband in it, had torn off one of his ears, and bade him take it to his king, and say that, if he had had him in his power, he would have done the same to his majesty. At a later period the story was universally disbelieved: however, at the moment, as it was generally believed that the man had lost an ear,* no one questioned his statement; and when he added that, when he found himself subjected to such cruel treatment, he recommended his soul to God and his cause to his country, the house became violently excited, the country caught the flame, and the cry for war with Spain became general. For some time Walpole made a gallant resistance: he attempted to avert war by a fresh negotiation with Spain, and, in order to negotiate with effect, made ostentatious preparations for war. The Spaniards, as little desirous of war as himself, restored many of the vessels, released the British sailors whom they had seized, and at last consented to a convention, by the terms of which they were to pay a considerable sum of money as compensation to the British merchants. But as this convention did not expressly abolish the right of search claimed by the Spaniards, the clamour of the opposition was increased by it rather than diminished, and, unfortunately, the preponderance of eloquence in both houses of parliament was wholly on their side. Walpole's jealousy of power had driven both Carteret and Chesterfield from office, and there were no speakers among the lords comparable to either of them. In the same way he had alienated Pulteney in the lower house, and, by taking away his commission in the army from Pitt, had made him an irreconcilable enemy; and Pitt's oratory was soon seen to be a weapon of most formidable power. They all now thundered against the convention, and in the commons 232 members

* Horace Walpole, however, quotes a speech made in the house of commons, in 1761, by a Mr. Harvey, who asserted that Jenkins "died with his ears on his head," and Burke appears to agree with this view, as he speaks (Letter I on a regicide peace) of "the fable of captain Jenkins's ears."

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voted against an address to thank his majesty for having concluded it. The majority for the address was only twenty-eight, being by far the smallest that had ever yet been counted in favour of the minister : the support of the people was evidently failing him. To secure the favour of the king, Walpole consented to the payment of a subsidy to the Danes, nominally to oblige them to supply us with a body of troops, should we require them, but in reality to induce them to waive their claims on the lordship of Steinhurst, which George II., as elector of Hanover, had lately bought of Holstein, but which the king of Denmark claimed as belonging to his dominions. This measure, however, only gave the opposition an additional handle for attacking him, on the ground of English interests being sacrificed by it to those of Hanover ; while Walpole, to his dismay, found that the king also was eager for war with Spain. In a fatal moment for his own reputation he yielded, and on the 19th of October war was declared.

The universal joy which was diffused amongst the people by the declaration did not alter his opinion as to the injury which must ensue to the kingdom. In vain did the church bells ring, the bonfires blaze, the stocks rise, and even the prince of Wales stop at a tavern door and drink success to the war, while the heralds were proclaiming hostilities ; Walpole, while the peals were sounding in his ears, vented his discontent in a prophetic pun : " They are ringing their bells now, they will be wringing their hands soon ; " apparently without reflecting how deeply to blame he himself was in indulging them in a wish which he knew to be so pernicious.

If it should be said that his conduct was but a repetition of that deference to public opinion which we lately praised when speaking of his behaviour on the excise bill, it may easily be replied that the subjects of debate were so different, that no argument drawn from the one can be applied to the other. The abandonment of a proposed tax, however admirable that tax may have been, could not involve any wide-spread mischief. The money wanted could easily be supplied, in fact was supplied from some other source ; nor is there any matter on which the wish of the people has a greater right to be consulted than on a question to what taxes they prefer to submit, from what they think it most desirable to be relieved. But the miseries of war are not only wide-spread, but universal ; there is no remedy for them ; and the question of peace and war has been, by the principles of our constitution, removed from the decision of the people and of the parliament, the authority to declare war being vested solely in the king, to be exercised on the responsibility of his ministers, expressly because such a question, involving the happiness and misery of at least two nations, is of

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too momentous and solemn a nature to deserve to be entrusted to the clamour or caprice of the multitude, more easily led to listen to unfounded complaints of imaginary injuries, or to equally vain suggestions of their own rights and of their own power, than to weigh either in the scales of prudent and dispassionate reason.

Yet Walpole's surrender of his conscience by thus going to war did not relieve him from his difficulties ; while, on the other hand, his difficulties did not diminish his resolution. The duke of Argyll was commonly said to have sagacity sufficient always to foresee the fall of a party in time to forsake it ; and he had lately begun to proclaim the difference between his opinions and those of the minister. His abilities, his vast possessions, and the ideas of clanship prevailing in the Highlands, combined to render him the most powerful noble in the kingdom ; but Walpole at once dismissed him from all his employments, and ranged him too on the side of his adversaries. The duke of Newcastle also, though careful to give Walpole no pretext for depriving him of his place, began to resist many of Walpole's proposals, and to show a seeming spirit of independence, by which Walpole was not taken in, though he could not avoid feeling that such conduct in such a man was an unmistakable sign of the decay of his own power. He himself was as fond of office as the duke, and began to try the most singular expedients to preserve it. At one time he meditated prevailing on the king to consent to a measure to separate Hanover from England at the next vacancy of the throne ; a proceeding which would at once have restored his own popularity. At another time he sought by sending civil messages to the Pretender, to secure the support of the Jacobites ; while at the same time he endeavoured to found a better claim to the good will and esteem of his countrymen on the successful prosecution of the war.

The most vulnerable parts of the Spanish power were her American possessions ; so he sent out two strong squadrons against them, one commanded by commodore Anson, a thorough seaman, of invincible courage, fertile in resources, and, above all men of his time, skilful in inspiring confidence into, and in gaining the affection of, his crew ; the other under admiral Vernon, an officer of no great skill in his profession, but so brave that he could have afforded to be less boastful and arrogant. Anson met with great difficulties and disasters, but his energy overcame them all. He lost the greater part of his squadron in storms, the greater part of his crew by wreck and disease ; yet he landed in Peru, destroyed the city of Paita, took the great Manilla galleon, by the capture of which he obtained an enormous amount of prize-money for himself and the survivors ; and, after an absence of nearly four years, arrived at Spithead, having greatly extended the naval reputation of England in every quarter of the globe.

Vernon had not the same difficulties to encounter, but did not meet with the same success. He took Porto Bello, the governor of which made scarcely any resistance; but when, after having received a large reinforcement, he made an attempt on Carthage, it failed, and he was fain to lay the blame on the slackness of the soldiers engaged in the expedition, and on their unwillingness to co-operate with the sailors. Still, though England gained but little by his expedition, the injury which he inflicted on the Spaniards was very considerable. He himself boasted that he had destroyed all their fortifications in those countries; and, though this statement was rather exaggerated, he certainly contributed to establish the reputation of England as the mistress of the seas, and he was received at home on his return with an enthusiasm equal to that which had been excited by the hard-won and universal triumphs of Marlborough. Medals were struck in his honour, with an inscription terming him the avenger of his country; his birthday was celebrated with feasts and bonfires; and his portrait became a favourite sign for public-houses, some of which preserve it to this day.

Yet his success, exaggerated as was the opinion of it, brought no advantage to the minister. It even furnished the opposition with fresh topics for attacking him, as they contrasted his exploits with the inactivity displayed by admiral Hosier, when in command of a much larger fleet in the same seas twenty years before, an inactivity which was notoriously forced upon him by his instructions; and argued that as Walpole then was a party to the orders given to Hosier, it was probable that the vigour displayed by Vernon proceeded rather from his own spirit than from the newly-awakened courage of the minister. At last, in February, 1741, formal motions were made in both houses of parliament for an address to his majesty, begging him to remove Walpole from his councils for ever, and were supported by Carteret in the upper, and by Pulteney and Pitt in the lower house with great eloquence, and, in the case of Pitt, with still greater vehemence and passion. Walpole himself was not usually an orator of the highest class, but on this occasion he was inspired by his own danger, and made a most masterly defence of his policy, pointing out the relief from taxation which by his maintenance of peace he had been able to afford to all classes, the steady growth of commercial and internal prosperity which had taken place during his administration, and exposing the selfishness and inconsistency of his adversaries with such effect that the motion was rejected by an immense majority of the commons, and by a very decisive one in the lords. The Jacobite members refrained from voting at all, being unwilling to give their support to any minister of king George, but feeling equally bound not to press

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factionously on one who, while carefully baffling their schemes, had treated themselves with such constant lenity.

It is greatly to be regretted that we have but scanty records of the eloquence of these days ; but the parliament viewed with greater jealousy than ever any attempt to publish their debates, and in the year 1737 both sides of the house of commons agreed unanimously that to give any account of them in any kind of newspaper was " a high indignity to, and a notorious breach of the privileges of the house ;" Pulteney arguing that to do so was to make the speakers accountable out of doors for what they said in parliament, while Walpole's main objection appears to have been that the reports were unfair, partly from the incompetency of the reporters, and partly from their deliberate intention to misrepresent the arguments of the side to which they were adverse.*

Though still preserving his love of peace, Walpole was now forced to prepare for another war. The accession of a woman, Maria Teresa, to the hereditary dominions of her father, the late emperor Charles VI., seemed to afford Frederic II., the new king of Prussia, (one of the ablest and worst men who ever rendered his possession of a throne the cause of universal distress to every country with which it came in contact,) an opportunity for extending his power ; and, on the most frivolous grounds, he invaded her territories, and tried to excite other potentates also to aid him in dismembering them. The situation of the injured queen excited general sympathy in England, which Walpole shared so far as to propose to parliament to grant her a large subsidy, and to prepare to aid her further with an armed force of 12,000 men, in accordance with the late treaty of Vienna. He also instructed lord Hyndford, the English ambassador at Berlin, to expostulate with Frederic ; but peaceful arguments proved ineffectual ; and George II., finding that France was inclined to join with Frederic, began to fear for his continental dominions, and stipulated with Frederic for the neutrality of Hanover, promising also to vote against the raising of the queen to the imperial throne at the ensuing election.

The disgust which this step of the king's deservedly caused in England had no slight effect upon the fortunes of his minister, the attacks upon whom daily increased both in number and vigour. Caricatures and pamphlets were made use of to inflame the people out of doors, one of which combining both species of assault, professed to record the " Life and Death of Piers Gaveston, Prime Minister of the unfortunate King Edward II.," and bore on its frontispiece a likeness of Walpole, with a label inscribed

* There was some foundation for this charge, for even so honest a man as Dr Johnson, who reported debates about this period in *Cave's Magazine*, acknowledged afterwards that " he took care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it."

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"Corruption" in his hand, an executioner in front of him, and an arm holding a sword over his head. He himself had been lulled into an undue confidence by the late majority in his favour, and was not aware that some of his own colleagues, such as lord Wilmington and the duke of Newcastle, were secretly caballing against him. The Pretender, also, wrote letters to all his adherents in the new parliament, which was on the point of assembling, desiring them to use all their efforts to cause his retirement; and even his warmest partisans perceived that the elections had gone so unfavourably for him, that he would never be able to reckon on more than a very scanty majority, which would soon be surely converted into a minority.

The new parliament met in December, 1741. It was to no purpose that the falling minister conceded many points to his adversaries. The attempts to detach the prince of Wales from the opposition by an offer to pay his debts, and to increase his income, were equally fruitless. Already, one or two unimportant motions had been carried against Walpole, when, on the 21st of January, 1742, Pulteney brought forward one for a committee to examine into the conduct of the war, necessarily involving serious charges against the minister. Walpole again made a splendid defence, and was ably seconded by sir William Yonge. Both sides made the greatest exertions to bring up every possible vote. Many were brought from their sick-beds to vote against the minister; nor were his partisans more scrupulous, though they proved less ingenious than their adversaries. They also brought a number of invalids to the house, and kept them in an adjoining room till the division was about to take place; but when the decisive moment arrived, they found that the opposition had stopped up the key-hole, so that the door could not be unlocked in time, and they were left to kick at it with unavailing rage till the tellers had reported the numbers to the speaker. The majority in his favour was only three; and a week afterwards he was in a minority of sixteen on a question concerning the Chippenham election. He never appeared again in the house of commons. On the 9th of February his promotion to the peerage, as earl of Orford, was gazetted; and on the 11th he resigned his offices, not without an unexpected display of concern on the part of the king, who burst into tears when he accepted his resignation, and expressed his due sense of his long and great services, and his hope of still often receiving his advice in moments of difficulty.

Since the death of lord Burleigh no one had governed England for such a length of time as Walpole; nor had any administration been equally honourable to the minister, and equally beneficial to the people. He had entered upon office at a time of great diffi-

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culty, of great commercial perplexity and distress, aggravated by the circumstance of there being a pretender to the crown, supported by a body of numerous and able adherents, ever on the watch to take advantage of any opening for the advancement of the cause which they had at heart, and by the notorious good will of some of the most powerful sovereigns on the Continent. He re-established public credit, and by remodelling the system of taxation, which he based on sounder principles than had previously been acknowledged or advanced, he gradually raised the country to a pitch of prosperity, which enabled it to meet the unprecedented expenses of the wars of the latter portion of this reign; and he preserved the throne to the reigning family, leaving them far more securely seated on it than at his accession to power, while at the same same time he treated the Jacobite faction with unexampled forbearance and humanity. His foreign policy was equally wise and successful. In spite of the restlessness of France and Prussia, and of the entangled state of the affairs of Spain and of the empire, he preserved peace almost without interruption for nearly twenty years; and, though he at last suffered the united determination of the people and of the king to persuade him to embark in war, we must recollect that blameable as his conduct in this respect was, it was less blameable than that of any other of the parties concerned, especially than that of Pulteney and Pitt, who not only drove him into that pernicious measure, but who, in a great degree, stimulated the people out of doors to the vehemence which they displayed in demanding it.

Nor, though he has often been charged with having ruled by means of corruption, did he greatly deserve such an imputation. On the contrary, in one of the last debates which took place before he quitted office, sir Charles Wager, who had for nine years presided at the admiralty, declared that in all that time Walpole had never once solicited the promotion of any one. He attained power, because the unanimous voice of the nation pointed him out as the fittest man for it, at a most critical moment; and he retained it, because the evident wisdom of his measures conciliated general support, even that of the king, who, as we have seen, was at first desirous of superseding him. His eloquence was not of the highest order, yet it was practical, forcible, and successful. On the whole, he certainly deserves to be considered one of the best and ablest of the many good and able ministers, to whom the country owes her glory and her happiness.

CHAPTER LV.

GEORGE II. (CONTINUED).

THOUGH mortified by his defeat, Walpole behaved with rare patriotism, doing everything in his power to facilitate the new arrangements. Even before his resignation, Pitt had begun to intrigue for place, and had attempted to come to a secret understanding with him, offering, as it was notorious that Pulteney's party had talked of an impeachment, to stand by him and resist any such proceeding, if he would use his influence with the king in Pitt's favour. Newcastle, too, was eager to secure the first place in the new ministry; but, finding himself unable to succeed in that object, consented to convey the message, which the king, by Walpole's advice, sent to Pulteney, offering him the chief place, but making it a condition that no attempt should be made to prosecute Walpole. Pulteney, however, foolishly, and, for a public man, wrongly, had long before made a public declaration that he would never take office, and he now fancied himself bound to adhere to his ill-considered pledge. So the king reverted to his old favourite, Compton, now lord Wilmington, who became first lord of the treasury; Pulteney accepting a seat in the cabinet without office, and, at the end of the session of parliament, the title of earl of Bath. Lord Carteret and the duke of Newcastle were the secretaries of state, and lord Hardwicke, one of the greatest judges who had ever adorned the bench, and a firm adherent of Newcastle, continued to hold the great seal as lord chancellor. The prince of Wales obtained, as the reward of his countenance of Pulteney's party, the same addition to his income which Walpole had offered to secure to him the preceding year.

The first proceedings of the new ministry were directed to the prosecution of Walpole. They first proposed an enquiry into the whole of his administration, and, when defeated in that proposal, carried one for an enquiry into his conduct for the last ten years; but the committee which they appointed failed to discover any evidence to justify an impeachment, or, in fact, any proof whatever of corrupt or unconstitutional conduct. The amount of secret service money which had been expended was undoubtedly large, but it did not greatly exceed that of preceding periods, and the small

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increase which had taken place was easily accounted for by the intricate state of the relations between the different foreign powers, in procuring accurate information of which Walpole had been very successful, and by the still more pressing necessity for watching the intrigues of the Jacobites, whose endeavours he was always wisely and humanely anxious to prevent rather than to punish. Being completely disappointed, they moved in the house of commons for a bill to indemnify all persons who should give information against lord Orford; they carried it through the commons, though not without difficulty, but it was indignantly rejected in the house of lords, chiefly through the efforts of the lord chancellor, who denounced it as an iniquitous bill, calculated to make a defence impossible, to deprive innocence of its guard, and to let loose oppression and perjury upon the world. The enquiry, though conducted by his most rancorous enemies, resulted in proving lord Orford's complete innocence, and in bringing contempt upon his accusers. He had never lost the confidence of the king; he soon regained that of the nation, who saw that his successors adopted his policy, with no difference except that they carried it out with inferior skill and success; and that when divisions arose, as they shortly did arise, in the new cabinet, both sections of it had recourse to his advice and influence.

Lord Wilmington was at the head of the treasury, but the real chief of the ministry was Carteret; and whatever may be thought of the consistency of his measures, they showed no want of ability and vigour. The duties of the secretary of state were not divided as they are now; but one managed what was called the southern, and the other the northern department; and Carteret, as the secretary for the northern department, had the conduct of the prosecution of the war in support of the queen of Hungary. The king, though anxious to protect Hanover from injury, was equally desirous to distinguish himself as a commander; and, in deference to both his wishes, the secretary forgot his old harangues against Hanoverian interests, consented to propose to take 10,000 Hanoverians into British pay, and to unite them, the Hessians, and the British troops, who had been already sent to Flanders, into one army, under the command of lord Stair. It was in vain that Pitt in the commons, and Chesterfield in the lords, declaimed against sacrificing England to Hanover; the nation at large espoused their doctrines, but the parliament gave them but slight support, and in the spring of 1743 the king himself crossed the Channel with his second son, the duke of Cumberland; and in June joined the army on the Maine, where lord Stair, whose faculties and energies had been somewhat impaired by age, was outnumbered and out-generalled by the duke de Noailles, who, at the head of 70,000 men, was rapidly

cutting off his communications, and was beginning to conceive hopes of compelling the whole allied army to surrender. It had some time previously been joined by the duke d'Arenberg and about 10,000 Austrians, and now amounted to between 40,000 and 50,000 men. But differences had arisen between D'Arenberg and Stair, which required the king's authority and presence to compose. The king determined to retreat, but such a movement was full of difficulty and danger : it was necessary to pass by the small town of Dettingen, and, in order to reach it, to cross a small but rapid river, over which there was only one bridge, which Noailles commanded by a strong battery. The allies suffered severely in their advance, and their destruction seemed inevitable, when Noailles's nephew, the duke de Grammont, who had been stationed in an advantageous position to prevent their passage of the river, was carried away by his own impetuosity to cross it and attack them, by which movement he placed his troops in front of his uncle's batteries, so that they could no longer be of service, and transferred all the advantages of the ground to the allies. The British troops behaved with admirable steadiness ; the king placed himself at their head, cheering on his men, and the impetuous charge of the French was speedily repulsed ; they were driven back in disorder, and with heavy loss ; and thus a day which threatened to cause the destruction of the whole army ended in their triumph.

The king had behaved with great intrepidity and coolness, as had the duke of Cumberland, who was wounded, and who gave a signal proof of his humanity in insisting on the surgeon attending one of the French prisoners who was cruelly mangled, before he would permit his own injuries to be examined.

The allies, as the enemy was still far superior to them in numbers, did not attempt to derive any further advantage from their victory, beyond prosecuting their retreat in security ; and, as the French also retreated and recrossed the Rhine to their own country, no further operations took place, and in the autumn the king returned to England.

He found his ministry divided by fierce dissensions among themselves. Lord Wilmington had died during his absence, and Pulteney, fearful lest the duke of Newcastle should entirely supersede his interest with the king, was persuaded by Carteret to overcome his reluctance to accept office, and applied for the treasury ; but Mr. Pelham, Newcastle's brother, and the paymaster of the forces, had made a similar application, in anticipation of Wilmington's death, and had obtained the king's promise in the event of a vacancy. He now received the appointment, and began to study how to get rid of Carteret, whom he looked upon, in spite of his late success, as a formidable rival in the king's favour.

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In fact the ministry was unpopular with the country, and its unpopularity was chiefly owing to the measures of which Carteret was the chief advocate. It was mainly by his eloquence that the consent of the commons to employ the Hanoverian troops had been gained, and it was against him especially that Chesterfield and Pitt declaimed as the author of what they called the Hanover measures of the cabinet. They even ventured to make a formal motion for disbanding the Hanoverian troops, in which Pelham, who was always timid, would have acquiesced, had it not been for the interference of lord Orford, to whose influence with the king he probably owed his place, and who now declared that their dismissal would be a gratuitous insult to his majesty. The motion was defeated; and as the French ministers, at the beginning of the year 1744, contracted a new alliance with Spain, and began openly to speak of invading England in support of the Pretender, the real danger for a while united all hearts in defence of the kingdom, and the opposition co-operated with the ministry in voting large supplies, large levies of troops, and in passing whatever bills appeared necessary, such as attainting the sons of the Pretender, in case they should attempt to land, and suspending the habeas corpus act.

As yet, in spite of the battle of Dettingen, as the English had only appeared in the character of allies of Maria Teresa, and the French as allies of Frederic, no declaration of war between the two nations had taken place; but in March, 1744, war was formally proclaimed both in Paris and London, and both parties prepared for a desperate struggle. At the very beginning of the year, Charles Edward, the eldest son of the Pretender, had quitted Rome for the French coast, in order to take the command of 15,000 French troops destined to invade England. Marshal Saxe, the most celebrated officer in the French service, was appointed his lieutenant. And in March a splendid fleet issued from the ports of Brest and Rochefort, and sailed up the Channel, and, when the admiral believed that they had secured the mastery in the British waters, they sent the news to the young prince, who was waiting at Dunkirk, and who at once began to embark his troops on board transports, which had long been prepared to receive them; but the British fleet, under sir John Norris, which had been lying in the Downs, quickly came out in sight of the French fleet, which was anchored at Dungeness, but which retired on their approach; and the next day so violent a storm arose, that several of the French vessels, and several of the transports were wrecked, and the damage done to the whole fleet was so considerable, that the expedition was postponed to another year.

Marshal Saxe took the command of the French army in Flanders,

where he gained several advantages over the allies, which might have been counterbalanced by a naval victory off Toulon, had not the English commanding officers, Matthews and Lestock, (between whom an ill feeling previously existed, from Matthews having been sent to supersede Lestock two years before,) quarrelled so violently, that they allowed the enemy to escape, when wholly in their power. After a long enquiry into the affair, Lestock was acquitted by a court-martial, and Matthews declared incapable of serving for the future; but the general failure of the campaign gave the enemies of Carteret (who by his mother's death had lately become earl Granville) fresh encouragement in their endeavours to undermine him. At last, at the end of the year, Pelham and Newcastle presented to the king a memorial drawn up by the chancellor, who was, at all times, their unflinching partisan, enumerating all their objections to Granville's policy, (which had notoriously been guided by the king's wishes,) and, in effect, giving the king the choice between him and themselves. Very reluctantly did the king yield, but he found himself unable to resist the force thus brought to bear upon him. At the end of November Granville resigned, and Mr. Pelham endeavoured to strengthen himself further by new-modelling the administration, and forming what, in the language of the day, was called the broad-bottom ministry. Lord Harrington succeeded Granville as secretary of state. The king very unwillingly consented to Chesterfield being lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and to his going on an embassy to the Hague before he took possession of his government; but he absolutely refused to allow any office to be assigned to Pitt, who had given him personal offence by his frequent and virulent harangues against Hanover. But as Pelham and Newcastle promised Pitt never to relax their exertions in his favour, till they had removed the king's displeasure against him, Pitt changed his politics and his policy, supporting all the measures of the ministry, and speaking in favour of the employment of foreign troops in Flanders with fully as much vigour as he had ever shown in denouncing it.

Thus strengthened, the ministry concluded a quadruple alliance with Holland, Austria, and Saxony, by which they agreed to pay large subsidies to all the belligerent powers. Nor was their eagerness to fulfil their stipulations abated by the utter indifference of their allies to the engagements into which they had entered, Austria and Holland not furnishing half the number of troops which they were bound to supply; so that when, in April 1745, the duke of Cumberland arrived in Flanders to assume the chief command, he had barely 50,000 men with whom to oppose Saxe at the head of 90,000 of the choicest troops of the French army. Saxe laid siege to Tournay, the allies marched towards him with the resolu-

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tion of fighting a battle for the relief of that important city, and the French were equally eager for the conflict, which the king and the dauphin came from Paris on purpose to share. The French occupied a strong position behind the village of Fontenoy, their right being protected by the Scheldt, and their left by a wood; but the duke, after consulting the Austrian and Dutch generals, marshal Konigsegg and the prince de Waldeck, resolved on attacking them. Saxe had left 15,000 men to cover the blockade of Tournay, but was still superior in numbers to his assailants. At dawn, on the 11th of May, the attack began. The duke himself led on his men, and the battle was stubbornly contested for some time. The Dutch behaved ill, and one of the British divisions under general Ingoldsby behaved worse; but the narrowness of the space on which the battle was fought neutralized the enemy's superiority of number, and victory began to incline to the side of the allies. The irresistible British infantry had pierced the French centre, and defied the most gallant efforts of the French cavalry to break their serried ranks, or to check their slow but sure advance. At last Saxe was preparing to retreat, when, as a last resource, the body-guard of Louis, consisting of some thousands of the choicest cavalry, and a small battery of artillery, which had been stationed in front of the king for the defence of his person, was brought up to attack the terrible British column. The artillery made a fearful gap in its dense mass, through which the cavalry broke with fatal effect, and the battle was lost. The duke rallied his men, restored his line, and then, after nine hours' ceaseless fighting, retired in good order, with scarcely greater loss than he had inflicted on his conquerors, whose abstinence from any attempt to harass him in his retreat was a sufficient proof how severely they had suffered.

The consequences, however, of the battle were as great as if the victory had been more decisive. Tournay, Ghent, Bruges, Oudenarde, Dendermond, and Ostend fell successively into the hands of the French, who, as the greater part of the British forces were recalled to make head against the Pretender in England, before the end of the year 1746, made themselves masters of nearly the whole of the Austrian Netherlands.

It had a still more important effect on these islands, by deciding Charles Edward to renew his attempt to recover his father's kingdom. As far back as the year 1740, the adherents of James in Scotland had signed an undertaking to rise in arms in his cause whenever a body of foreign troops should arrive as auxiliaries to such an enterprise. They had ever since considered such an aid as indispensable; and had lately, in representations made to the young prince, fixed its amount at, at least, 6000 men, with arms for 10,000 more. Without such a force they considered all prospect of success

hopeless, and such a force there was now no chance of obtaining, since the king of Prussia, who professed to be a Protestant, and who at all events was not a Roman Catholic, had expostulated so strongly with his ally the French king on his endeavours to re-establish popery in England by supporting the Pretender, that Louis declined to furnish any more troops for such an object, and the prince had no alternative but either to trust to his own resources, or to decide on abandoning the idea altogether. He decided on the former course, borrowed money from his friends, raised more by pawning his jewels, and wrote to Scotland to announce his intention of crossing over immediately. His Scotch friends remonstrated in vain against the hopelessness of such an attempt. By the aid of some English merchants at Nantes he procured two vessels to carry himself and the small store of ammunition and money which he had been able to procure; and, though the larger of the two was attacked by one British man-of-war and forced to put back into port, and though the smaller one, the *Doutelle*, on board of which he himself was, was chased by another, and escaped with difficulty among the narrow channels which divide the Scottish isles, he landed in safety at Moidart, in Inverness-shire, on the 25th of July, accompanied by only five or six friends. Many of his most faithful adherents came to him at his first summons; and all who did so, without exception, implored him to return, since his enterprise could end in nothing but ruin to all concerned in it.

The prince's arguments and entreaties were alike ineffectual to shake their judgment, till a younger brother of Macdonald of Kinloch-Moidart, one of the chieftains present, seized with a sudden enthusiasm for him whom he had been bred up to consider the son of the lawful king, declared that if no one else in all the Highlands would join him, he at least would die in his cause. Kinloch-Moidart himself and Macdonald of Clanronald caught the infection of his ardour, and agreed to take up arms. An almost similar scene took place a few days afterwards. Cameron of Lochiel had the most extensive influence over his brother chieftains of any man in the Highlands; he too came to Moidart, and earnestly pressed Charles Edward to return to France; but, when reasoning and prayer proved unavailing, the prince, with an address that never failed him, appealed as a last resource to his principles of honour and loyalty, and did not appeal in vain. "I am resolved," said he, "to risk everything; I will raise my standard, and Lochiel, in his own home, may learn from the newspapers the success of his prince." Conquered, though still unconvinced, Cameron vowed to share his fate, and to bring with him every one whom he could govern or influence. Led by his example, chieftain after

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chieftain declared their adherence to the cause; and, when on the 19th of August, the Chevalier, to give the prince the title by which he has since been commonly known, raised his standard in Glenfinnan, he found himself at the head of above 1000 men; many but poorly and partially armed, but strong in a courage and fidelity that has never been surpassed.

Sir John Cope, the commander-in-chief in Scotland, without delay collected his troops and marched northwards, at the head of about 3000 men, in the hope of crushing the insurrection in the bud; but, when he arrived in the neighbourhood of the rebels, he found them so strongly posted on a steep mountain called Corry Arrack that he declined to attack them, and proceeded onwards towards Inverness to join the clans who preserved their loyalty to the government. Greatly encouraged by this timid conduct of his adversary, the Chevalier pressed on towards the Lowlands, finding his numbers daily reinforced, as the Grants, the McPhersons, the Murrays, and other clans joined him on his march. His own appearance and conduct contributed eminently to his success with a people so little civilized as, with the exception of a few of their chieftains, the Highlanders generally were. He was in the flower of youth, eminently handsome, and powerful, and of an imposing height; as free from all delicacy or effeminacy as the hardiest among them; sleeping on the open moor, eating contentedly of the humblest fare, and listening with apparently ceaseless interest to their national songs, and time honoured traditions. Eagerly pressing onwards to the south, he made but a short stay in Perth, crossed the Forth above Stirling, and on the 15th of September arrived in sight of Edinburgh.

A regiment of dragoons, commanded by colonel Gardiner, an officer of deservedly high reputation, was seized with a sudden panic at the sight of their advancing host, and fled disgracefully to Dunbar; but, while the city magistrates, thus left almost defenceless, were deliberating on the course to be pursued, news arrived that Cope had returned to Aberdeen, had embarked his men on board some transports, and was hastening back to their defence. They began to negotiate with the Chevalier in hopes to gain time; but in the mean while Lochiel surprised one of the gates, the rebel army poured into the city, and at midday, on the 17th, Charles Edward entered the metropolis of Scotland in triumphal procession, while, amid the acclamations of the people, the heralds proclaimed his father king by the title of James VIII.

The castle, however, was still held by general Guest and an adequate garrison, who were able greatly to annoy the Jacobite forces in possession of the town. The prince gave a splendid ball in Holyrood Palace, and the next day quitted the fair city in

pursuit of his enemies, with whom he longed to measure his strength in battle. Cope had landed his forces at Dunbar on the 18th, and on the 20th the two armies, of nearly equal force, each consisting of from 2000 to 3000 men, came in sight of one another near the village of Preston. No historian can equal the great novelist of our language in the description of the battle which ensued, if, indeed, that may be called a battle, which only lasted a few minutes. A morass separated the two armies; but a gentleman in the prince's service showed his comrades a safe path across it, which they passed during the night, and at daybreak fell on the surprised Royalists. The Jacobites had only one cannon, a rusty, useless piece, dragged along with some difficulty by three or four Highland ponies, not because the commanders trusted much to it, or even intended to fire it, but because the Highlanders, unused to any fire-arms beyond pistols and fowling-pieces, looked with great reverence on an engine which from its size they had named the musket's mother; but the royalist army had a comparatively numerous artillery. Their battery, however, was stormed by the Camerons and Stuarts before a gun was fired. The dragoons, who had fled before, fled again. The infantry stood their ground; but, having both their flanks uncovered by the misconduct of their comrades, they were cut down almost to a man. Above 400 of the king's army were killed, and four times that number were taken prisoners, while the loss of the conquerors did not exceed 100 killed and wounded. Cope did his best to rally his troops, but could not recover them from their panic. They retreated, almost without a halt, to Coldstream, and from thence to Berwick; while Charles Edward returned in triumph to Edinburgh, winning the hearts of his enemies by his clemency to his prisoners after victory, as entirely as he had gained those of his adherents by his intrepidity on the day of battle.

His success, as was natural, produced him a considerable addition to the number of his adherents. By the end of October his army mustered nearly 6000 men. Many French and Irish officers also joined him; and he likewise received a considerable sum of money, with a valuable supply of arms and ammunition from France. He now thought himself strong enough to descend into England, though his Scotch advisers were greatly disinclined to such an expedition, and his council began to be divided by dissensions among themselves, the Irish officers being jealous of the Scotch, the Protestants being suspicious of the Roman Catholics, and all grumbling against lord George Murray, who, though an able man, was too rough and peremptory in his manners to gain the affection of a body of leaders who affected such a tone of individual independence as the Scottish chieftains. To such a height did these

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differences arise, that on one occasion lord George resigned his command, but was prevailed upon to resume it.

The advance towards England was skilfully conducted, the army being divided into two columns, so that marshal Wade, the royalist general in the north of England, was at a loss to know at what point the rebels proposed to cross the border, and at last awaited them in Northumberland, while they, having united their forces, turned off towards the western coast, and surprised Carlisle. They marched rapidly towards the south, capturing Preston, Wigan, and Manchester without opposition, but receiving very few accessions of force, till at last, on the 5th of December, they reached Derby, and there they halted, to deliberate on their future operations.

In the mean while the government had been active, raising troops in every quarter, forming a camp at Finchley for the immediate protection of London, sending to Holland to claim the aid of the Dutch troops, despatching squadrons to cruise off the French and Scotch coasts, so as to prevent any supplies or reinforcements from reaching the rebels, and endeavouring by every possible expedient to excite the feelings of the English against their invaders. They even had recourse to handbills, full of strange stories of the mischiefs to be apprehended from them. In one town placards urged the butchers to unite against an army composed wholly of Roman Catholics, who ate no meat in Lent; in another, mothers were urged to rouse their husbands and sons to take arms against the Highlanders, whose favourite meat was the flesh of young children; but their arguments had but slight effect. The country generally viewed the struggle with singular apathy; so much so, that Mr. Fox, who had lately joined the ministry, wrote to one of his correspondents that every thing depended on which forces arrived first, the Dutch or the French; for that he believed the whole kingdom would yield to the first comers without a battle.

But this apathy was far more injurious to the rebels than to the government; that had a solid foundation of strength, which time would fortify further; their only hope lay in exciting the enthusiasm of the nation, to which hope delay was fatal. Accordingly, on finding that, though they were now within 130 miles of London, no Englishmen of rank or influence joined them, and that the common people were equally lukewarm, lord George and all the prince's chief councillors gave him their unanimous advice to retreat towards Scotland. It was with the greatest reluctance that he adopted it. In such an enterprise as his it was no doubt the confession of defeat; and yet, so desperate from the very beginning had that enterprise in reality been, that it was his wisest, one may say his only course. The guards and several newly-raised regiments were between him and London. Marshal Wade was coming

towards him through Yorkshire. The duke of Cumberland, with nearly double his numbers, was in Staffordshire; and he was evidently in danger of being surrounded on all sides if he remained where he was, while to advance further would only increase his difficulties.

Accordingly, the next day he began his retreat. The disappointment of the common soldiers was as great as his own, and was occasionally vented in outrages on the inhabitants of the districts through which they passed, greatly at variance with the good order which they had maintained during their advance. As they reached the northern counties the badness of the roads greatly hindered their progress. Their baggage-waggons broke down, and so scanty did their means of transport become, that, as they had now some cannon, lord George was forced to engage his men to carry the cannon-balls in their hands, giving sixpence for every ball so conveyed.

The duke of Cumberland had pursued the rebel army vigorously the moment that he heard of its retreat; but he never overtook it till he reached Clifton Moor, in Westmoreland, where he tried to check them, but was severely repulsed, and made no further attempt to harass them on their march. They pushed on rapidly towards the Highlands, marching from Carlisle to Glasgow, and from Glasgow to Stirling, where they were joined by some detachments, which had been raised during their absence, and which now swelled their numbers to 9000 men. It was as much in their favour that the duke of Cumberland was recalled to England to defend the south coast, where a French descent was apprehended, and that general Hawley, whom he left in command, was wholly destitute of military ability. Charles Edward laid siege to Stirling Castle, and, as Hawley marched to relieve it, drew up his men on the field of Bannockburn, in hopes to fight a battle on a spot so full of good omen for Scottish warriors; but, when Hawley arrived at Falkirk he halted, expecting that the Highlanders would disperse at the mere report of his vicinity. As he did not advance, the prince and lord George determined to attack him, and gave him a defeat, which, though prevented by the darkness from being very decisive, was yet so severe, that the English ministers sent the duke of Cumberland back in haste to Scotland to retrieve the injury which they imagined the king's interests had suffered.

In reality, however, the Chevalier was injured by it more than the king. Dissensions arose among his generals, each blaming the other for not having pushed their advantages further; and the Highlanders, who had obtained a great booty, returned home in numbers to secure it. For a while the siege of Stirling was persevered in; but, as it proceeded slowly, it was determined to

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abandon it, and to retreat to the Inverness Highlands, till the return of spring should admit of more active operations.

The events of the winter, however, augmented the difficulties of the rebels. Their supplies, of all kinds, began to fail, and the quarrels between their chief officers daily increased; while the duke of Cumberland, on the other hand, received important reinforcements. At the beginning of April both armies were again in motion; and the duke proceeded northwards from Aberdeen in order to bring the war to a decisive issue without delay. On the 14th of April the two armies were so near each other, that there was some skirmishing between their outposts; and, as the Chevalier's troops were little more than half as numerous as their enemies, he determined on a night attack, in the hope of gaining by a surprise what he had little prospect of obtaining by force. Late on the evening of the 15th the troops began to march; but the night was so dark that the guides missed their way, and the soldiers were so weak for want of food, having only had a single biscuit during the whole day, that they could not advance with the rapidity that had been calculated on. The day began to break, the prospect of surprising the duke's camp was abandoned, and lord George, retracing his steps for a short distance, drew up his forces in battle array on Culloden Moor. He wished to retire further, as there was still time to take up an almost unassailable position behind the river Nairn; but the prince himself, who thought it became his royal blood at all times to insist on the adoption of the boldest measures, determined to fight where he stood. Before noon he was attacked by the whole force of the duke. His right wing suffered so severely from the enemy's artillery, that lord George Murray charged the opposite battalions sword in hand, broke them, and took two guns; but the conquering regiments were encountered by a second line, which the duke had placed behind the first as a reserve, and their steadiness and heavy well-directed fire broke the Highlanders in a moment. The Chevalier's right wing was irrecoverably beaten, and the Macdonalds, who composed the left wing, refused to advance, alleging that, ever since the battle of Bannockburn, they had had the post of honour on the right, and that it was an undeserved insult now to place them on the left. Even when Macdonald of Keppoch, one of their most honoured chieftains, dashed forward with a few of his nearest kinsmen, and fell mortally wounded as he charged, the clan, with a false and fatal sense of honour, refused to move. At last they slowly retired, while the duke brought up his whole force to complete his easy victory.

The victory was complete, and decisive of the war. The number of killed in the rebel army was great. The prisoners were equally numerous, though numbers of the Highlanders dispersed the moment

that the struggle was over, and sought safety in their native mountains. All their cannon and baggage became the prize of the conquerors, who disgraced their triumph by unexampled cruelty towards the vanquished. Many of the prisoners were butchered in cold blood. Cabins, to which the wounded had crawled for shelter, were burnt to the ground with their wretched inmates. Some were shot for the pastime of the soldiers; some were hung; and those who were spared were treated, if possible, with even greater cruelty than those who were thus ruthlessly slaughtered. Lord George Murray rallied some of the fugitives at Ruthven, with the intention of still maintaining the cause of his master; but he received a letter from the prince renouncing all idea of any further contest. The men thus collected separated for ever, and the rebellion was terminated.

Many of the rebel leaders escaped to the Continent; the prince himself encountered a series of adventures, exceeding even those of his great uncle, Charles II., in hardship, danger, and romance; sometimes cooking his food with his own hands, sometimes not daring to cook any at all, lest the smoke should betray the fact of some person lurking among the barren rocks and desolate moors which for weeks formed his chief hiding-place. Now disguised in woman's clothes, now owing his safety to the fidelity of the poorest of the people, sometimes of robbers, sometimes even to those whose kinsmen had borne arms against him, but all of whom scorned to betray him, though the vast reward of 30,000*l.*, offered for his apprehension, would have enriched them for life; often being saved by the ready wit and heroism of that softer sex, to which distress never appeals in vain, and one member of which, Flora Macdonald, has earned herself a name in history by the important share which she bore in his preservation. Nor was he undeserving of such faithful service; bearing, as he did, all his hardships with a cheerful courage which never failed, and acknowledging his obligations with a sanguine gracefulness which for many years kept his name and the affection of his followers alive amid the mountains and islands which were so long his shelter. At last, in September, five months after the fatal day of Culloden, he was taken on board a vessel sent by the French government to hover about the Scottish coast for that purpose, and a few days afterwards he landed safely in France and passed the rest of his life on the Continent, constantly forming schemes for the recovery of his inheritance, and on one occasion venturing even to visit London, in order to judge for himself of the prospects of success, but never again becoming formidable or important.

While he was thus exposed to daily peril, the king's government was occupied in wreaking its vengeance on those of his adherents

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who had fallen into their power, and the ministers were too willing to follow the example and to yield to the suggestions of the duke of Cumberland, who, after earning the name of the "butcher," by his atrocities in Scotland, had returned to London, and was constantly urging them to the utmost severity. No one can blame the execution of the leaders, such as lord Lovat, lord Kilmarnock, and lord Balmerino; they had deliberately chosen to introduce civil war into the island, in order to overturn the government, and to re-establish a line of princes whose ancestor had forfeited the throne by his own folly and tyranny; and they now only paid the penalty which, from the beginning, they knew that they were incurring; but the common soldiers, who had engaged in the rebellion only in obedience to the influence of their superiors, might well have been pardoned. Yet numbers of these poor men were executed in every part of the kingdom, and their deaths, with all the torturing aggravations prescribed by the law of high treason, have left an indelible stigma of cruelty on those who sanctioned such indiscriminate punishment.

CHAPTER LVI.

GEORGE II. (CONTINUED).



HE king, who did not like his ministers, would willingly have got rid of them; but an event, which took place at the beginning of the year, showed him his inability to do so. Though Pitt forbore any demonstration of hostility to them, they were afraid of him while he was out of office; and, thinking the rebellion placed the king in some degree in their power, they had, in February, unanimously offered him the choice of admitting Pitt to office, or of accepting their resignations. He gladly chose the latter alternative, and entrusted the task of constructing a new ministry to Bath and Granville; but they found themselves unable to form one which should command a majority in either house, and, after two days spent in vain attempts, relinquished the task; the king was forced to take back his old ministers, with the addition of Pitt, who was made vice-treasurer of Ireland, and shortly afterwards paymaster of the forces; and the ministry, for a while greatly strengthened at home by the recall of lord Chesterfield from Ireland, which he had been governing with consummate ability, to assume the seals of secretary of state, in the place of lord Harrington, continued firm till the death of

Mr. Pelham, eight years later. Pelham was a pupil of Walpole's, and, adhering generally to his maxims, cultivated peace with assiduity, and with a success which is best testified by the scanty materials which his administration afford to the historian. In 1748 Chesterfield, finding himself constantly overborne by the jealousy and influence of Newcastle, resigned, and was succeeded by lord Sandwich, who, as the British plenipotentiary, immediately on his appointment went to the congress which met at Aix-la-Chapelle to arrange the terms of a general peace. All the belligerents were equally weary of the war; which had latterly been very disadvantageous to the French. Saxe had indeed inflicted another defeat on the duke of Cumberland at Lanfelt, where the blunders and misconduct of the Austrians and Dutch left the whole brunt of the battle to fall on the English division. Our troops never behaved with more heroic steadiness, till they were overborne by numbers; even then Saxe's loss had been so much heavier than theirs, that he was unable to gain any advantage from his victory. And it was more than neutralized by a succession of heavy blows which our admirals inflicted on the French by sea. In America, commodore Warren took Louisbourg and Cape Breton; and nearer home lord Anson, in May, 1747, gave one French fleet a severe defeat off Cape Finisterre; and in October, admiral Hawke, off Brest, achieved a triumph of extraordinary splendour, capturing almost the whole force opposed to him. Under these circumstances peace was concluded in April, leaving the different nations which were parties to it in nearly the same situation as they had been at the commencement of the war, with the exception of the additions to the Prussian territories, which Frederic had obtained at the expense of Maria Teresa.

During the tranquillity which followed, the country increased steadily in wealth and prosperity. Walpole's policy of encouraging trade by removing or reducing duties was adhered to with great success; and, for the first time in the history of the world, the government began to encourage systematic emigration, for the benefit both of the colonies and of the mother country; the army and the navy were considerably reduced, and, in order to provide for the disbanded soldiers and sailors, a sufficient portion of land, in the healthy province of Nova Scotia, was offered to all who would proceed thither. Above 4000 men accepted the offer, and crossing the Atlantic, with their wives and families, founded the city of Halifax, and established at once in full vigour a colony which has ever since been one of the most thriving dependencies of the crown.

In 1751 the ministry was further strengthened by the death of Frederic, prince of Wales, with whom expired every semblance of

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opposition. His weak and petulant character had caused him to be almost as generally despised as his brother was universally hated ;* but as his son, prince George, who succeeded to his title of prince of Wales, was only twelve years old, it became necessary to provide for the probable event of his accession to the throne during his minority. The king, who showed the greatest want of feeling for his son's loss, was anxious that the duke of Cumberland, whom he hitherto had always regarded with especial favour, should be the regent ; but he was so unpopular that Pelham would not venture to propose his appointment, and, though there was no precedent for any woman having had such a charge entrusted to her, the bill brought in by the ministry, with the cordial assent of every one except the king and the duke, appointed the dowager princess of Wales regent during her son's minority, and established a council, at the head of which was to be the duke of Cumberland, to assist her with their advice.

The same year saw also the reformation of the calendar. It was notorious that the original calculations, made in the time of Julius Cæsar, wanted minute exactness ; in the lapse of years, the error had grown to a variation of eleven days between the real and the nominal period of the year ; and every country in Europe, except England, Russia, and Sweden, had adopted the new style, or amended calendar, which lord Chesterfield now undertook to establish here. He introduced the subject in the house of lords in an eloquent and learned speech, moving for leave to bring in a bill which should rectify the existing errors, by striking out eleven days in the ensuing September, providing against the recurrence of such an error in future, and making the year begin on the 1st of January, instead of, as heretofore, on the 25th of March. The bill was passed by both houses of parliament, and received the royal assent ; but was long very unpopular with the common people, who conceived that their lives had been shortened by the abridgment of the existing year ; and who, at the next election, assailed more than one of the members who had supported the innovation with a

*The popular feeling about him, and indeed about his whole family, may be understood by a jocular epitaph which was circulated in the London coffee-houses, and sung about the streets :

"Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead ;
Had it been his father,
I had much rather ;
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her ;
Had it been his brother,
Still better than the other ;
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation,
But as it's only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
There's no more to be said."

demand that he should restore to them the eleven days of which he had assisted to rob them.

The court was still the scene of occasional intrigue and dissension, but the affairs of the kingdom were proceeding with prosperous regularity, when, at the beginning of 1754, Mr. Pelham died almost suddenly; having deservedly earned the character of an honest and a prudent minister, and leaving the chief position in the ministry as an object of competition and intrigue to candidates of very different qualifications.

The vacant place at the treasury was filled by the duke of Newcastle, who succeeded his brother, resigning the seals as secretary of state, and giving to Mr. Legge the office of chancellor of the exchequer, which he himself, as a peer, was unable to hold. But the post of real importance was the secretaryship, which would include the management of the house of commons, and would make its occupant the real prime minister of the kingdom.

Ever since he had been forced into office in 1746, Pitt had been steadily rising in popularity with the nation, and, as he hoped, had made some progress in attaining the favour of the king. The first he had earned, nobly earned, by the honest disinterestedness with which he had refused the enormous perquisites which had previously been considered to belong to his office as paymaster; the second he had endeavoured to secure less justifiably, by the tacit abandonment of nearly all the views which he had so loudly advocated while in opposition, by assenting to the system of subsidies against which he had declaimed, by entering into the king's continental projects, and, in spite of his former denunciations of the Hanover connexion, declaring that that kingdom ought to be as dear to Englishmen as Hampshire; and he was now openly aspiring to a prominent place in the cabinet.

The secretary at war, Henry Fox, father of the still more celebrated Charles James Fox, was also a candidate for the chief place in the ministry. His parliamentary talents were of the highest order, though, like his more accomplished son, he excelled as a debater rather than as an orator; but, as happened also in the succeeding generation, when their illustrious sons renewed the rivalry of their parents, his personal character was greatly inferior to Pitt's. He was known to be dissolute and embarrassed, and was believed to be corruptible, if not corrupt. But, as a man, like his son, he was everything that was attractive and amiable, and, if he had but few political adherents, no one had a greater number of personal friends.

One other statesman must be mentioned; of abilities equal, and in many respects superior, to either of these great rivals, but inferior in moral courage; or, I should rather say, in restless energy,

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to either of them, William Murray, the attorney-general; but he, actuated partly by a love of quiet, and partly by a just appreciation of his own qualities, and by a correct judgment of the line in which he was best calculated to shine, forbore to strive for the prizes of statesman-like eminence, and contented himself with aiming at the highest judicial dignities, which no one ever attained with more honour, or filled with more lasting renown.

Neither Pitt nor Fox, however, obtained the object of their ambition. Pitt was ill at Bath with the gout; nor had the king quite overcome his disinclination to being brought into personal contact with him. Newcastle did offer the post to Fox, with the lead in the house of commons, but, as he insisted on retaining in his own hands the whole disposal of the secret service money, without informing Fox of the manner in which he applied it, though a great portion of it was at that time devoted to bribing members of the house of commons, Fox refused to undertake the office on those terms, and the secretaryship was conferred on sir Thomas Robinson, a man of no kind of ability. Fox, anxious not to lose the place which he had, and lured by a seat in the cabinet, agreed to assist the new secretary; but Pitt was furious. He pretended, indeed, that his indignation arose more from the way in which Fox had been treated than from his own disappointment: but he thundered against sir Thomas, and at times even against Newcastle himself, till both his victims became almost weary of their places, Fox quite weary of defending them, and till the nation became thoroughly disgusted with their manifest incapacity.

Yet, though his affairs were in this miserable state, the king insisted on his yearly summer visit to Hanover, partly for pleasure, and partly with a view to carry out his schemes of continental politics under less control than while in England, for matters were evidently tending to a war with France. In the East the French and English East India Companies had been at constant variance, and had now for some years been carrying on open hostilities against each other; in the West the frontier between the American settlements of the two kingdoms had of late been violently disturbed, a body of French troops had been routed by an English regiment in Nova Scotia, a town in Virginia had been sacked by the French, and an English detachment, under major George Washington, had been forced to capitulate; other skirmishing had ensued with alternate success and discomfiture, while two English ships had attacked and taken two French ships off the coast of Newfoundland. War was not yet declared; but it was plain that its declaration could not be long delayed, and the king, as usual, began to direct his first thoughts to the means of saving Hanover from its consequences; negotiating treaties with the different petty states

of Germany, who were glad enough to hire out their troops for English money; and with Russia also, the influence of which country it was thought might operate as a check upon the ambition of Frederic of Prussia, should he be inclined to attack those of his uncle's dominions, which lay in such tempting proximity to his own.

But these subsidiary treaties were always unpopular with the nation; and Legge now positively refused his signature to those which the king and Newcastle had just concluded. At last, Newcastle applied to Pitt, who was known to be willing to make terms with him; in his childish manner he caressed him, hugged him, wept over him, loaded him with the most profuse compliments, and finally offered him a seat in the cabinet, with a promise of the seals of the secretary of state at the first vacancy, if he would only support the treaties. Pitt so far compromised his opinions as to offer to support the Hessian subsidy as a personal gratification to the king, but pronounced against a system of subsidies, and broke off the negotiation; insisting that the nation could not support a naval and a continental war at the same time; (it was not long before he proved that it could do both, and could carry both to a triumphant conclusion.) At the same time he began to pay court to the princess of Wales, who was chiefly under the influence of her favourite, lord Bute, a man with no qualifications for her favour but a showy person and a pompous manner. The late prince of Wales, who knew him well, had been used to say that he was just fit to be sent ambassador to a court where there was nothing to do; but his beauty and stature were sufficient for the princess, who openly inveighed against the ministry; and caressed all who were in disgrace with Newcastle.

Disappointed in his endeavours to gain Pitt, Newcastle again had recourse to Fox; Robinson retired with a pension, and Fox became secretary of state. More than ever exasperated, Pitt, the very first day that the parliament met, denounced the whole system of the government, the subsidies, the sacrifice of the interests of the kingdom to Hanover, and, above all, the coalition between the prime minister and the new secretary. He and Legge were dismissed from their offices, and for some time the ministry went on without giving any very palpable signs of increasing weakness, and even concluded a treaty with Frederic, which greatly dispelled the king's uneasiness about Hanover.

Meanwhile, though war was not declared, France was known to be making great preparations, both by land and sea, and a French invasion of England was very generally apprehended; while so low had the spirit of the nation sunk, that, instead of raising a native army, the parliament agreed to resolutions requesting the king to

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bring over some Hanoverian and Hessian regiments to defend the country from its expected assailants.

The real object of the French, however, was not the invasion of England, but the recovery of Minorca, which had been taken from them by Stanhope in the reign of queen Anne. It was defended by a scanty garrison, under the command of general Blakeney, a gallant officer, but disabled by age and infirmity; and a small and ill-appointed fleet was sent to its assistance, under admiral Byng. At the beginning of April a more powerful fleet, having on board an army of 10,000 men, left Toulon to attack that important island. The troops landed without resistance, and began to attack the principal castle. Byng arrived at the end of May, and engaged the French fleet; but, finding that he had received fully as much damage as he had inflicted, and that his ships were in very bad condition, and judging also that a victory would not save Minorca, where the French army was opposed by not more than a sixth of its numbers, he did not attempt to renew the action, but, with the full approval of a council of war, retired towards Gibraltar, which he thought likely to be another object of attack.

The fall of Minorca excited the whole people to the most violent indignation. War had been declared against France the moment that the first news arrived of the French having landed there; and now every voice clamoured for vengeance on those to whose misconduct they imputed the loss. Some officers were at once cashiered, preparations were made for bringing Byng to trial, and the tone of the whole people became so menacing, that Fox determined to escape from his share in the attacks which he foresaw impending at the next meeting of parliament, and resigned the seals, while almost at the same time Newcastle was deprived of the support of the only other person in the commons who could cope with Pitt, by the death of the chief justice, and the resolution with which Murray, the attorney-general, insisted on his right to succeed to the vacant dignity. Newcastle was in the greatest perplexity. He tried to conciliate the princess of Wales by giving lord Bute the principal post in the household of the young prince, who had just attained the age of eighteen, which had been fixed for his majority; he tried to gain Pitt by offering him Fox's office; Pitt refused to serve under him in any situation; he then offered Granville, the president of the council, to exchange posts with him, and to relinquish to him the supreme management of affairs; to do any thing, in short, rather than to abandon office, to which he clung with a daily increasing fondness, in spite of the daily increasing evidence of his incompetency to fill it.

At last he resigned; yet, in spite of the constant intrigue, corruption of others, and utter subserviency to the king's Hanoverian

politics, by which he had so long preserved his different places, he is entitled to the praise, in that day a rare one, of entire personal disinterestedness. Instead of increasing, he had greatly diminished his large fortune; and he steadily refused to repair it by a pension, or a sinecure, modes of enriching themselves then too commonly adopted by retiring ministers.

Still preferring every alternative to that of putting himself wholly in Pitt's power, the king sent for Fox, and desired him to form a ministry, which should comprise Pitt; but Pitt, who looked upon Fox as having deserted him in the preceding year, refused to act with him; and at last an administration was formed, which was in reality Pitt's, though the duke of Devonshire was at the head of the treasury. Pitt became secretary of state, with the lead of the house of commons, and his brother-in-law, lord Temple, a pompous, heavy man, with no recommendation but that of being Mrs. Pitt's brother, was made first lord of the admiralty.

In December the new ministry met the parliament, and the language which they put into the king's speech, and their conduct in the debate on the address, was not calculated to diminish the antipathy which he felt to them. They made him announce that he was about to send the Hanoverian troops back to their own country. They also made him recommend the houses to provide for strengthening the militia, a force which he was known to regard with especial disfavour; and when it was proposed in the lords to thank him for having brought the Hanoverians over, lord Temple, though ill, came down to the house on purpose to oppose the motion, which he did in terms which the king could hardly regard as anything but personally offensive. Pitt's own conduct was not calculated to increase his influence; he was at all times self-confident and impracticable, and now he treated all his colleagues with intolerable haughtiness. Nevertheless, his vigorous mind stamped its impress upon all the measures of the government. A large addition to the usual supplies was granted. One hundred thousand men were voted for the two services; and Pitt, with a magnanimous policy, of which he afterwards justly boasted, raised some of the new regiments in the Highlands, not fearing to enlist members of the clans which had in the last rebellion been foremost in disaffection. Pursuing the line of conduct with reference to the king's personal wishes, which he had adopted while paymaster, he even prevailed on the commons to grant a small subsidy to Hanover; but the royal resentment was too deeply rooted to be so easily appeased, and his majesty was still resolved to get rid of him at the earliest opportunity.

The chief business, however, which occupied the attention of the kingdom during the existence of this ministry was the trial of

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Byng. After a long enquiry the court-martial considered that they could not avoid finding that he had not done his utmost to relieve Minorca, though they fully acquitted him of either cowardice or treachery. By the cruel severity of the articles of war any neglect of duty was punishable only by death ; but, as the court which convicted him considered his failure to have arisen from a venial error of judgment, they unanimously recommended him to mercy. The sentence gave rise to a debate in the house of commons ; and, in spite of the popular feeling, which was eager for some victim, the house too was clearly desirous that the admiral should be pardoned. The blame of the execution of his sentence undoubtedly rests with the king. Pitt ventured to plead earnestly for mercy. He did not venture, as probably he might have done, had his influence with the king been greater, to insist on mercy being shown. The members of the court-martial separately made more than one effort to save a man, whom, if they had anticipated the fate to which they were condemning him, they would probably never have convicted ; but their efforts were in vain ; and in March, to the astonishment of all Europe, the admiral, who had behaved throughout this trying time with the most dignified calmness and intrepidity, was shot at Portsmouth, on board the flag-ship.

The king had been excessively displeased with the conduct of both Pitt and Temple during this affair, complaining that Temple had been personally insolent to him ; and, believing that the duke of Newcastle's influence was still strong enough to command the support of parliament, he suddenly deprived them and their colleagues of their offices, and again called the duke to his councils. The discontent of the nation, which had been tranquillized by the installation of Pitt in office, was rekindled with tenfold vehemence by his dismissal. The city of London voted him its freedom, and nearly all the chief towns in the kingdom followed the example : to use the expression of a shrewd, though not always trustworthy annalist of the time, Horace Walpole, "for some weeks it rained gold boxes ;" while, at the same time, a placard was fixed on the gates of St. James's Palace : "Wanted, a secretary of state. Honesty not necessary. No principles will be treated with."

Newcastle was perplexed and irresolute. The king wished him to unite with Fox ; but he had discernment enough to see that Fox's unpopularity would surely drag him down with it ; and Pitt, whose favour with the people, and weight in parliament, alone gave promise of a strong and lasting administration, had on a former occasion refused to unite with him at all ; while an administration, which excluded both, was sure to be attacked by both, as he had already experienced. He was also in some degree alarmed for himself, as a motion for enquiry into the causes of the loss of

Minorca had been voted, and had begun a few days after the dismissal of the late ministers; and the result of the enquiry depended greatly on the part which Pitt might take.

Pitt, however, was not disposed to press hardly upon him. He was eager to return to office; and recent events had shown him that he could not return alone, nor stand alone; but that the support of the duke's borough and family influence, and of his experience in managing parliaments, were as indispensable to him, as the aid of his eloquence and vigour of mind was necessary to the duke; and he showed his inclination for union in a most characteristic manner. He was always fond of theatrical effect; and, having a fit of the gout while the enquiry was proceeding, he came down to the house with his legs bandaged, and his arm in a sling, making as ostentatious a display of his infirmities as if he had been a candidate for the papacy; and, instead of the violent harangue which was expected from him, he recommended moderation in a few gentle sentences, and led the committee to a result, which, on the whole, was a decided acquittal of the ministers who had sent out Byng's expedition.

Still, though his moderation on this occasion was generally understood as a signal of his willingness to unite with the duke, the terms which he demanded were so high, that the negotiation between them was broken off. Expedient after expedient was proposed, considered, and rejected, till, at last, when the nation had been nearly three months without a government, lord Chesterfield undertook the office of mediator. He persuaded Pitt to abate somewhat of his demands, and Newcastle to consent to a more equal partition of power than he had previously contemplated. The king most unwillingly consented to the only arrangement possible, comforting himself as well as he could by calling the nobles who had failed to answer his expectations Newcastle's footmen; and at last the ministry, known afterwards as Pitt's ministry, was formed, and at the end of June the members of it entered upon their several offices. The duke took the treasury, Pitt was secretary of state, with the lead of the house of commons, the supreme direction of the war, and of all the foreign affairs which had been previously, as has been mentioned, divided between two departments; while Fox was pacified and silenced by the office of paymaster, the most lucrative of all posts while the war lasted, but was not admitted to a seat in the cabinet.

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CHAPTER LVII.

GEORGE II. (CONTINUED).



THE new ministry entered upon office with happy omens, although as yet they knew not of them. Only five days before they kissed hands, a great victory had established the dominion of England over the whole of Bengal ; and we must pause for a moment, to trace in a few brief lines the events which placed a company of merchants in a position to become gradually the lords of a mighty empire. The Mogul dynasty had been established in India nearly a century, when the English East India Company, originally established in the last years of the reign of Elizabeth, received increased privileges from James I., and from Charles II. the right of making peace and war with all powers in those countries which did not profess Christianity. The success of this company induced the formation of a second ; but the two amalgamated in the reign of queen Anne ; and, by granting the government frequent loans at low interest, easily obtained constant renewals of their charters. Their first factories were established at Surat, in the gulf of Cambay, and at Bantam, in the island of Java ; but the Portuguese harassed the settlers at Surat, and the Dutch inflicted cruel outrages on the traders at Bantam, so that they soon abandoned both these stations, founded Madras, in the reign of Charles I., and received from Charles II. the present of Bombay, which had formed a portion of the dower of Catharine of Braganza. They also established factories on the Ganges ; and, soon after the revolution, having obtained from the great Aurungzebe a grant of land, they constructed a strong citadel, which they called Fort William, and under the protection of which they founded the splendid city of Calcutta, the capital of our Indian dominions ; and Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay were now erected into separate presidencies, each having its affairs administered by a president and council, and keeping on foot a small military force, composed partly of Europeans and partly of native troops, for its protection.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the hostility of the Dutch and of the Portuguese to the English settlements had nearly died out, the Dutch having almost wholly withdrawn from the con-

tinient of India to the islands, and the Portuguese power having greatly decayed. But the French had begun to be very formidable rivals. About the middle of the reign of Louis XIV. they had begun to turn their attention to the East, had established an East India Company in imitation of ours, and had obtained a settlement on the Ganges, a little above Calcutta, called Chandernagore. They had also founded Pondicherry, a little to the south of Madras, and had colonized the fertile islands of Mauritius and Bourbon; their seats of government being fixed at Pondicherry and the Mauritius, to which they had given the name of the isle of France.

The recent governors of these presidencies, Dupleix and La Bourdonnais, had been men of great talents, but, luckily for the English, they were not very cordial towards each other. In 1746, La Bourdonnais fitted out a fleet at the isle of Bourbon, with the design of laying siege to Madras. Dupleix refused his co-operation, and, when La Bourdonnais had captured the city, and exacted a large ransom for it, Dupleix complained of his enterprise as an encroachment upon his own province, took upon himself to violate the treaty into which La Bourdonnais had entered, and detained many of the principal English inhabitants of Madras prisoners. The next year the English were so strongly reinforced, that they, in their turn, laid siege to Pondicherry, though without success, and in 1748 the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle compelled Dupleix to restore Madras, and to desist from further hostilities against the English.

Peace, however, was never of long duration in India. The native princes were incessantly quarrelling, and a dispute now arose between two competitors for the dignity of nabob or viceroy of the Carnatic. The French took one side, the English, as a matter of course, espoused the other. At first the party which Dupleix supported prevailed. Though no soldier himself, he had an able general, the marquis de Bussy, under his command. Bussy defeated his enemies in a considerable battle; took Arcot, the capital of the province, and was equally successful in establishing the prince, whom he favoured, as the Nizam, or viceroy of the Deccan. To commemorate his exploits, Dupleix built a splendid city, and adorned it with a stately pillar, which bore on its four sides inscriptions recording his triumph.

After the fall of Arcot, the defeated prince, with a small body of English troops, had fled to Trichinopoly. The conqueror, with his French allies, pursued them, laid siege to that town, and soon reduced it to great distress. The English interests in that district were in imminent peril of extinction. Major Lawrence, who had previously held the chief command of their forces, had returned to England, and there seemed no one of rank sufficient to supply his

place, when the state of affairs was suddenly changed by the genius and valour of one man. Robert Clive, the son of a Shropshire country gentleman of ancient lineage, but of small fortune, destined to leave behind him a name second to none in the glorious list of those heroic spirits who have overthrown and founded empires, was a captain in the company's service, twenty-five years of age. He had come out to India as a writer, he had escaped from captivity in disguise, when Dupleix violated the capitulation of Madras, and soon afterwards had exchanged his peaceful occupations for an ensign's commission. As a soldier, his energy had recommended him to the favourable notice of major Lawrence, and he had rapidly risen to the rank of captain. He now came forward and suggested to the governor of the presidency, that, though it was impossible to relieve Trichinopoly, it might be practicable to make a diversion in its favour by surprising Arcot, which would have the same effect. He was entrusted with the execution of his own plan, and in August, 1751, marched with 500 men to attack a city with 100,000 inhabitants. The very audacity of his enterprise contributed to its success. The garrison were astounded, and when they saw that a most fearful thunderstorm could not arrest the advance of their assailants for a minute, they abandoned both city and citadel without striking a blow, and Clive took undisturbed possession of both. The nabob instantly detached 10,000 men from the army in front of Trichinopoly, to recover so important a stronghold. Clive made a gallant defence, which was protracted long enough to give time for some of the chieftains of the Mahrattas, a numerous and warlike, though predatory tribe, to come to his aid. Hearing of their approach, the nabob's son determined to storm the place before they could arrive. His soldiers, intoxicated with a drug called bang, swarmed up to the breaches which their artillery had made in the walls. A raft, loaded with picked men, crossed the fosse towards the weakest part of the ramparts, and troops of elephants, with strong iron plates on their foreheads, were driven against the gates. The garrison did not amount to the twentieth part of the number of the enemy, and of that garrison not one-half were Europeans. All depended on Clive; he was every where; he directed so heavy a fire of musketry against the elephants, that they turned and fled, trampling down the forces behind them; finding that his artillerymen were unskilful, he himself pointed his heavy guns with such fatal effect, that the raft was sunk, and large gaps were made in the dense array of the besiegers; they retired in the night; Clive sallied out, joined his forces to those of the Mahratta, Morari Row, fell upon the retreating enemy, and gave him a severe defeat. At the beginning of the next year he repeated the blow, and, passing by the city and pillar of Dupleix, razed both to the ground, giving the natives a

high idea of the power of a nation which treated with such insult the French monuments of victory and dominion.

These exploits had scarcely been completed, when Lawrence returned, and he and Clive not only speedily relieved Trichinopoly, but gave the besieging army a severe defeat, making prisoners of the greater part of their French allies. The English supremacy was established over the whole peninsula; and Clive, whose health had been impaired by the climate and by his own incessant exertions, sailed for England.

Two years afterwards, at the end of 1755, he returned to India, as governor of Fort St. David, a small station to the south of Madras, and was beginning to take vigorous measures for the security and extension of British commerce in that district, when he was called to a wider theatre for his genius. Surajah Dowlah, the viceroy of Bengal, was only nineteen years of age, with a more than usually ferocious temper. He became desirous of picking a quarrel with the British inhabitants of Calcutta, and, on pretence that one of his officers, who had robbed him, had found refuge in that city, he seized the British merchants residing near his capital of Moorshedabad, and marched to attack Calcutta itself. The garrison was scanty, the governor was a coward. Mr. Holwell, a merchant of character and influence, endeavoured, in vain, to defend the city; and, after two days' resistance, he was compelled to surrender. The English inhabitants, one hundred and forty-six in number, became his prisoners. He reproached them for their resistance, but promised that their lives should be spared. Possibly he intended to keep his word, but for that night the wretched captives were left at the mercy of his guards, and that mercy was more terrible than the studied cruelty of the most despotic tyrants. It was midsummer, the 20th of June, a season in India which all the cooling inventions of art, spacious chambers, lofty halls, shaded verandahs, sparkling fountains, waving fans, and cooling beverages, can hardly render supportable to an inhabitant of Northern Europe, and the guards determined to confine all their prisoners in a single small dungeon, known as the Black Hole. It was with difficulty that they could all be forced into its narrow space; they expostulated, entreated, and resisted, in vain. The last were driven in at the sword's point, and the door was then locked upon them till morning. No pen can describe sufferings such as no other band of sufferers ever felt. The stifling heat became intense, intolerable. Through two narrow windows the wretched captives in vain implored the compassion of the guards, who mocked them in their agony. One officer, more humane than the rest, did order some vessels of water to be brought, but they were too large to enter the windows; without the nabob's order no one dared to open the

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door, and the nabob was asleep. There was no relief; some went mad, some implored the guards to shoot them, some died, and, as their corpses instantly began to putrefy, aggravated the sufferings of their surviving comrades. When the morning came, the few who were still alive could not be led out till the guards had cleared a lane for them by piling up on each side the bodies of those who had expired, and then one-seventh of the number who had been thrust in a few hours before, staggered, half-dead themselves from that loathsome charnel-house. Yet was not the cruelty of the nabob exhausted. Those who survived were put in irons till they would reveal the hiding-places of the wealth which he believed them to have secreted; and one lady, the only female of the party, was sent to his harem at Moorshedabad.

The nabob wrote an exulting account of his exploit to his nominal sovereign, the Great Mogul; but he had little cause to congratulate himself. Every Englishman at Madras burnt to avenge his murdered countrymen; and Clive was sent with 900 Europeans, and 1500 native troops, (sepoys as they are called, from the Indian word *spahi*, a soldier,) to inflict summary chastisement on the nabob. It was Christmas when he reached the mouths of the Ganges. The garrison of Calcutta yielded after one ineffectual sally; he advanced and stormed Hooghly; surprised the nabob's army by a night attack, routed it, though an unusually thick fog prevented the blow thus dealt from being as decisive as it otherwise would have been, and compelled Surajah Dowlah to restore to the English all their former privileges, and to make compensation for all the acts of pillage which he had committed in the preceding year.

It was soon discovered, however, that the nabob, in spite of the treaty which he had lately signed, was intriguing with the French; and Clive, and admiral Watson, the commander of the fleet, and a colleague worthy even of Clive, determined to attack Chandernagore. The flag ships of Watson and of Pocock, his second in command, sailed up the Ganges, and poured so destructive a fire into the town, that it was soon rendered untenable; the garrison surrendered, and Clive flattered himself that this success would terrify the nabob into fidelity to his engagements.

It had the contrary effect; it made him only the more eager to deliver himself from such formidable neighbours, and he redoubled his solicitations to Bussy, who had made himself master of the country of the Northern Circars as far as Ganjam, and who was little more than 200 miles from Calcutta; but Surajah's fickleness and cruelty had excited the contempt and hatred of many of his own subjects, and a party had been formed to dethrone him, and to put the general of his forces, Meer Jaffier, in his place. The conspiracy was communicated to the English at Calcutta; Clive

promised to support it with all his power, and began to march towards Moorshedabad, with about 1000 European and 2000 native troops, and nine small field pieces. Surajah Dowlah drew out his army, consisting of 35,000 infantry, 15,000 cavalry, and upwards of forty guns of large calibre, and encamped near the village of Plassey. It was the 21st of June; only one year and one day had elapsed since the miserable remnant of the nabob's prisoners had tottered out of the Black Hole, and already the hour of retribution had arrived. When the English reached the banks of the Hooghly, Clive, pondering anxiously on the vast disparity of the two armies, for a while faltered in his resolution, and called a council of war. Many years afterwards, he said that he had never called but one, and that if he had been guided by that one, he should have ruined the Company. As it is usually the case, the majority decided for cautious measures: Clive agreed with them, and resolved not to attack; but such a resolution was too much at variance with his natural disposition to be long persevered in. Again and again he reconsidered it, taking counsel of himself alone, till he decided on abandoning it, led his troops across the river, and before day-break on the 23rd heard the drums and cymbals in the Indian camp. The sentinels had given notice of their approach, and at dawn the nabob marched to attack them. For some hours both armies contented themselves with a distant and ineffective cannonade; but when some of his most distinguished cavalry officers had fallen beneath the more skilful aim of Clive's artillerymen, Surajah Dowlah began to retire in some disorder, and Clive took instant advantage of the movement to charge him with his whole force. The defeat of the enemy was instantaneous; they fled, the nabob among the first, so rapidly, that the slaughter was but trifling; but they left behind them their whole artillery and baggage, and the empire of India as the prize of the victory.

Clive's whole loss in killed and wounded amounted to only seventy-two men. He installed Meer Jaffier as the nabob of Bengal; and, in return, the English fleet, army, and especially their commanders, were amply enriched by the gratitude of the new prince.

The India Company showed its gratitude by appointing its heroic preserver governor of Bengal; and one of his first acts displayed that appreciation of the genius of others which is one of the surest marks of genius in the judge, and one of the most valuable qualities in a ruler of many people. He appointed as resident agent at the court of the new nabob a young man, twenty-six years of age, Warren Hastings, the only man, gallant, able, and virtuous as most of the rulers of India have been, who has equalled his own renown on that theatre of mighty spirits and mighty actions. Clive had won Bengal like a great soldier; he ruled it like a great statesman.

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The mere terror of his name dispersed a large army with which Shah Alum, the eldest son of the Great Mogul, was besieging Patna; a detachment which he sent, under colonel Forde, against the French settlements in the Northern Circars met with great success, and took Masulipatam, the most important of the French cities; while his measures for the revival and extension of the Calcutta trade were equally vigorous, judicious, and successful.

Meer Jaffier began to be alarmed at the power of his ally, and tempted the Dutch, who shared his feelings, to send a formidable expedition up the Hooghly, under the plea of applying for the redress of some alleged grievances. Clive was placed in a difficult position, for, if he allowed the Dutch troops to unite with those of Meer Jaffier, he ran a risk of being overpowered by their combination; if he attacked the Dutch, he was putting to hazard the peace between them and the English in Europe: moreover, his army was greatly weakened by different detachments which he had sent out, and the fleet had lately quitted the Bay of Bengal; but he formed his decision in a moment, and sent Forde, who had lately returned from his expedition against the Circars, to attack them. The Dutch were completely defeated, and, at the beginning of 1760 Clive returned to England to receive the reward of his achievements in the applause and admiration of his countrymen.

Though the greatest, his were not the only triumphs of the English in India during these years. A new French governor, Lally Tollendal, had been making vigorous efforts to re-establish the supremacy of his nation in the Carnatic. He arrived in Hindostan in April, 1758; speedily retook Arcot, and laid siege to Madras. His attempt on that city failed; and in the latter part of the next year, colonel Eyre Coote arrived from England with a reinforcement of English troops considerable for those times, when an English army in India was reckoned by hundreds instead of thousands or tens of thousands. Coote had already distinguished himself for daring valour; in the council of war before Plassey he was one of the few who had given his voice for an immediate attack, and he had likewise great skill in his profession. He had scarcely landed when he advanced inland, took Wandewash, a strong fort from which the British had been repulsed before his arrival; and, in January, 1760, gave Lally a severe defeat beneath the walls of the same fortress.

A new reign had commenced before he finished his campaign; but, to connect the Indian achievements of this period together, we must carry our story on to January, 1761, when, after a siege of five weeks, and a most gallant resistance by Lally and his garrison, Coote took Pondicherry, and terminated the French dominion in India. At a later period we shall find him nobly sustaining his well-won reputation by fresh exploits.

CHAPTER LVIII.

GEORGE II. (CONTINUED).

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ITTS avowed policy was to consist mainly in a vigorous prosecution of war. The English treaty with Prussia had been followed by a similar union between France and Austria, which the genius of Kaunitz had effected in opposition to the policy of the French ministers ever since the time of Richelieu, whose aims had been steadily directed to bridling the power of the house of Hapsburg; Poland, Saxony, and Russia joined the alliance; and Frederic, obtaining information of the confederacy which had been formed against him, had, in the preceding year, anticipated his enemies, by beginning the seven years' war, and pouring his unexpected battalions into Saxony; but, while the ministerial arrangements in England were in the unsettled state mentioned in the last chapter, Frederic had been reduced to great extremities by his defeat at Kolin; and his disasters in that quarter prevented him from affording any aid to the duke of Cumberland, who, with 50,000 men from Hanover and other German states, was severely pressed on the Weser by a French army of very superior numbers. Towards the end of July he was defeated at Hastenbeck; and, finding his communications entirely cut off, he shortly afterwards concluded a convention at Closter Seven, by virtue of which the different contingents, which made up his army, returned to their several countries; so that Hanover and its dependencies were left at the mercy of the French soldiers, who pillaged it in the most ruthless manner. The king was indignant beyond measure, and vented the whole of his displeasure on the duke, whom he recalled in disgrace, and reproached before the whole court; yet, though the duke had not shown much military ability, he had resisted a superior force with great courage and resolution as long as resistance was possible; and the terms which he had procured were more favourable than he had any right to expect; in fact, the duke de Richelieu incurred the displeasure of his court for making any convention with an army which, with a very slight exertion of energy, he might have destroyed or forced to surrender.

Pitt endeavoured to counterbalance this disaster by vigorous attacks on the maritime frontier of France, fitting out expeditions

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against Rochefort, Cherbourg, and St. Malo, which met with but slight success, and which could not possibly have gained any advantage equal to the vast expense of the armaments employed. He tried also to engage Spain to unite with England in war against France, offering to restore Gibraltar if by her aid he was enabled to recover Minorca; but, happily for his reputation with posterity, his offers were rejected, and the court of Madrid resolved on maintaining its neutrality.

But if the measures of the government in Europe were attended with but slight or doubtful benefit, in Africa and America their triumphs were glorious and decisive. On the African coast an expedition reduced the forts at the mouth of the Senegal and the island of Gorée, destroying the French commerce in that quarter; while in America, operations, carried on on a larger scale, had the most uniform and complete success. Pitt's plan comprehended the reduction of the islands of Cape Breton and St. John's, afterwards called Prince Edward's Island, of the French forts on the borders of the two lakes, George and Champlain, "the gates of Canada," as they were called in that country, and, finally, of the extensive and valuable province of Canada itself; and he chose his agents with great judgment. The fleet was put under the command of admiral Boscawen, the army under general Amherst and general Wolfe. Lord Loudon, whose incompetency and inactivity had provoked the sarcasm of the Americans, that he was like St. George on an inn-sign, always on horseback, but never advancing, and who had allowed the marquis de Montcalm, an able and enterprising commander, to prosecute his operations without disturbance, was recalled; but, unluckily, his want of ability had so concealed the still greater incapacity of general Abercromby, his second in command, that that officer was left at the head of the finest British force that had ever been seen in America. At the head of 16,000 men he was sent to attack Ticonderoga, an important fort on the narrow neck of land between the two lakes. Montcalm had barely one-fourth of his number; but he took up a strong position in front of the fort, and awaited the attack. In a preliminary skirmish the British gained a slight advantage, though it was dearly purchased by the death of lord Howe, an officer of the highest promise, and the chief object of the confidence and affections of the army; but the next day they were repulsed with terrible slaughter from an assault on the main works of the enemy; and the whole force would have been destroyed, but for the skill and coolness of colonel Bradstreet, who by great exertions restored order among the routed and disordered battalions, and in some degree retrieved the reputation of the troops by a well-judged expedition against the important fortress of Frontenac, on Lake Ontario.

The other parts of Pitt's plans were executed without the slightest alloy of failure. Fort Duquesne was taken without resistance, and received the new name of Pittsburg, in compliment to the minister ; but the great achievement was the conquest of Canada. After the fall of Cape Breton in the preceding year, Wolfe had returned home from ill health ; but as soon as his strength was recruited, he was again eager for employment, and Pitt, who had conceived a high opinion of his abilities, entrusted him with the command of the force destined to attack Quebec ; another army, under general Johnson, was to threaten Montreal ; and Amherst, with the troops in the command of which Abercromby had been superseded, was to renew the attack upon Ticonderoga, and, if successful, to push forward, and unite with Wolfe.

Johnson defeated the French, and took the fort of Niagara ; but by the time that this was accomplished, it was too late in the season for him to proceed towards Montreal before the winter. Amherst compelled the French to retire from Ticonderoga ; but, finding it necessary to his safe advance to obtain the command of Lake Champlain, he was forced to employ the remainder of the summer in constructing boats, and to postpone further operations till the next year. Wolfe's success was more immediate and more decisive. With 8000 men he had embarked on board the fleet, commanded by admiral Saunders, who afforded him the most skilful and zealous co-operation ; and in June they entered the St. Lawrence, and the troops were landed on the isle of Orleans, in front of Quebec. To defend this city, the capital of Lower Canada, Montcalm had about 10,000 men ; but the greater portion of this garrison consisted not of French soldiers, but of Canadians and Indians, as fearless as the French, but less imbued with the spirit of discipline, and less to be relied on for the steady resolution which is perhaps more required in resisting than in conducting an attack. The fortifications of the city were weak ; but its natural advantages were of the most formidable description. It stands on a table-land, protected on two sides by the river St. Charles and the river St. Lawrence, the banks of which are formed by high steep rocks, almost inaccessible ; a little below the town, another river, the Montmorency, falls into the St. Lawrence, and, in a great degree, protects a third side ; and behind the Montmorency, Montcalm took up a strong position, having his rear covered by impenetrable woods, so that neither his army nor the city entrusted to his charge could be attacked on equal terms. Wolfe erected batteries on the opposite bank of the river, and on the isle of Orleans, which, however, were not able to do any important damage to the enemy, who, in their turn, were more than once baffled by the vigilance of Saunders in their attempts to burn the fleet by

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fire-ships. At last, when more than a month had elapsed without any progress being made, Wolfe crossed the Montmorency, and attacked the French lines, but was driven back with considerable loss. He was greatly dispirited by all the circumstances of his situation. Though the news had reached him of Amherst's and Johnson's success, there seemed no probability of either being able to join him. Disease had greatly thinned his own numbers; at the beginning of September he began to despair of success, and wrote to his employers in England letters full of melancholy anticipation, which filled the kingdom with despondency. Three days after they arrived there came an express with the news that Quebec was taken.

The news was true. As he was gazing from his camp at the apparently unassailable position of the French army, the idea suddenly occurred to him to scale the heights on which it stood, trusting that the apparent impossibility of such an enterprise might facilitate it by preventing Montcalm's attention from being turned in that direction. The idea was no sooner conceived than it was executed. Soon after midnight, on the 13th of September, the troops were embarked on board the boats of the fleet, and transported up the St. Lawrence to a point 'about two miles above the city. They found a narrow and overgrown path up the rock, along which the men scrambled with difficulty. They had nearly arrived at the top before they were heard by the French picket, and, when they were heard, the night was too dark for the fire which the sentries directed down the cliff to have any effect. When the leading files reached the summit, they found that the picket had fled; they at once formed in line, company after company followed, the artillerymen succeeded in dragging up one gun, and at dawn nearly 4000 British soldiers stood ready for battle in front of the enemy.

Montcalm could hardly believe the messengers who brought him the first information of the position of Wolfe's army; but when he had ascertained the truth, he made no doubt of crushing them with his superior numbers. Had he waited to call in his scattered detachments he must have done so. But his confidence proved fatal to him. He speedily advanced to the attack, while his skirmishers kept up an incessant fire, and his Indian troops spread themselves out to the right with the view of turning the British position in that direction. The British stood firm, reserving their fire till the French were within forty yards, when they delivered it with a fatal precision, which threw the assailants into disorder. As they wavered, Wolfe himself sprang forward, cheering on his men to the charge. The French fled in disorder, but, at the moment of victory, Wolfe, who had already received two severe wounds, was

pierced in the chest by a third, and fell dying to the ground. Monckton, the next general, was also dangerously wounded, and the command devolved on general Townshend. At the beginning of the action Montcalm also had been killed, and his second in command had been mortally wounded. Those who succeeded them had not sufficient authority with the men to attempt to rally them, nor to maintain the defence of the city. On the 18th they capitulated, on condition of being allowed to return to France, and Townshend took possession of Quebec.

In his despatch to the government, Townshend endeavoured to appropriate all the honour of the victory to himself, but the truth was easily discovered, and the admiration of, and sorrow for the conqueror who had fallen, was universal. His remains were brought to England, and interred with great pomp, and a monument was ordered to be erected at the public expense in Westminster Abbey, to preserve his memory, and to stimulate others to similar achievements, by the example of his heroism and of his country's gratitude.

That no scene of action might be without its triumph, the arms of England were further graced by a naval victory of a most decisive character. Admiral sir Edward Hawke, with a splendid fleet, had blockaded the French in the harbour of Brest during the whole of the summer; but, when the equinoctial gales had driven him from his post, Conflans, the French admiral, sallied out with twenty-five ships, in the hope of overpowering a smaller squadron, which was cruising to the southward, under captain Duff. Before, however, he could overtake Duff, Hawke had returned, united his fleet with Duff's squadron, so as to be somewhat superior in numbers to Conflans, pursued him, and compelled him to seek shelter in the mouth of the Vilaine. The entrance of this river is so guarded by rocks on the one side, and shoals and quicksands on the other, that there is not a more dangerous spot on the whole coast; but, in spite of every obstacle, Hawke determined to attack the enemy, and, though two of his own ships ran ashore, which he was forced to abandon after taking out their crews, he captured two of the French ships, sank four more, and drove the rest up the river, many of them being too much disabled to be capable of being used again.

The exultation produced at home by these triumphs was unbounded; the parliament voted loyal addresses and liberal supplies, scarcely even criticizing a speech of Pitt's in commendation of the principle of raising money by excise duties, or comparing it with his speeches against Walpole's excise bill at the outset of his career. Nor was the general joy much damped by a certain degree of discredit which attached to the conduct of a British commander at

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the battle of Minden. Prince Ferdinand, Frederic's general in Westphalia, had with him a force of about 10,000 British soldiers, under the command of lord George Sackville, an officer of undoubted abilities, but of a wayward and impracticable temper, though not hitherto supposed to be of questionable courage. At Minden, on the 1st of August, the prince entrapped a far more numerous army of the French into making an attack upon him, which he easily repelled; he then defeated, and would have completely routed his assailants, had it not been for the disobedience of lord George, who, when the prince's aides-de-camp brought him an order to charge with the whole of his cavalry, under the plea that the two messages which he then received were of a contradictory character, declined to advance, suffered the opportunity to pass by, and the French to retreat almost unmolested. The prince, vexed at the French army having thus escaped from destruction, reflected severely on lord George's conduct, in an order of the day, expressing his wish that the second in command, lord Granby (who was well known to be greatly inferior in ability to lord George) had commanded the British cavalry, and his belief that in that case the issue of the day would have been far more triumphant. The real cause of lord George's misconduct was attributed, by his enemies, to cowardice, by his friends, to jealousy of the prince: both charges were almost equally disgraceful. On his return to England he was deprived of all his employments, and a court-martial, which sat to enquire into his conduct, pronounced him incapable of serving his majesty in any military capacity for the future.

Pitt was now at the height of his glory. He had raised the spirit of the whole people, so that they thought themselves a match for the world in arms. To quote the words of Walpole, the first question that every one asked in the morning was, "What new victory was announced?" and the parliament seconded his views with such liberality that, again to recur to the expressions of the same lively writer, "He had no more chance of hearing 'No' from the house of commons than a suitor would have of receiving such an answer from an old maid." Even the king, always fond of war, was fully reconciled to him by the unexampled series of triumphs lately witnessed, and which had not yet terminated. The year 1760 brought news of the reduction of Montreal and of the whole of Upper Canada, and in the midst of the joy caused by this event the king suddenly died of a complaint of the heart, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and the thirty-fourth of his reign.

With the exception of a moderate capacity for war, George II. had no great talents and no great virtues. He never gave proof of any statesman-like ability; but his chief fault as a king of England

was his partiality for Hanover, and his preference for Hanoverian over English interests, which of all errors was the one least likely to be excusable in the eyes of a proud and jealous nation like the English. His humanity too was impeached, because of the severities exercised against the Jacobites in 1746, and in subsequent years when some of them fell into his power; though on the other hand he spared the Pretender himself, being perfectly aware of his being in London a few years after the rebellion, and forbidding the secretary of state to molest him. Yet, though he was neither loved nor respected, his reign was eminently prosperous; at home his family was secured on the throne by the overthrow of the only hostile claimant; abroad immense additions were made to his dominions in both hemispheres. Still in some respects his authority may seem to have been inferior to that of his predecessors; their personal predilections, whenever they were energetically displayed, were sufficient to establish or to maintain a ministry; but George II. several times found himself overborne in this respect by the growing power of the parliament. He was unable to keep Walpole, he was compelled to keep Newcastle, he could not enable Carteret to stand for an hour, and he was forced to admit Pitt to his cabinet in spite of the personal offence which he had taken at many parts of his previous conduct. This had been the theory of the constitution, at all events ever since the revolution; but it had not hitherto been its practice: and its gradual establishment, which may be looked upon as almost complete at the end of this reign, marks a great advance in the general understanding by all parties of the proper principles of government, and a great improvement in the political condition of the people, to whom a parliamentary control over the appointment of the ministers of the crown is indispensable for the enjoyment and preservation of their legitimate rights.

CHAPTER LIX.

GEORGE III.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Emperors.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Russia.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Francis I.		Ferdinand VI.		Elizabeth	
Joseph II. . .	1765	Charles IV. . .	1788	Peter III. . .	1762
Leopold . . .	1790	Ferdinand VII. .	1808	Catherine II. .	1763
Francis II.* . .	1792	<i>Prussia.</i>		Paul	1797
<i>France.</i>		Frederic II.		Alexander . . .	1801
Louis XV.		Frederic III. . .	1786	<i>Popes.</i>	
Louis XVI. . .	1774	Frederic IV. . .	1797	Clement XIII.	
Republic . . .	1792			Clement XIV. .	1769
Napoleon . . .	1804	<i>Hungary & Bohemia.</i>		Pius VI.	1775
Louis XVIII. .	1814	Maria Teresa.		Pius VII.	1800

A.D.
1760.

On the 25th of October, 1760, George III. ascended the throne, and commenced the longest reign recorded in the British annals,—a reign at first disturbed by violent factions, and sullied by the loss of flourishing colonies, but ending in a blaze of unparalleled military glory, and marked throughout its whole period with the most splendid displays of political, literary, and scientific genius, with wondrous discoveries, and with constantly increasing prosperity, though the sovereign himself, suffering under the heaviest afflictions with which Providence chastises his creatures, was in his latter years insensible alike to the renown gained by his subjects, and to the reverential affection with which they regarded his declining age. He was now twenty-two years old, good looking in his person, and acute in his intellect, (though his mother, the princess of Wales, had allowed his education to be sadly neglected,) dignified in his demeanour, temperate and religious in his habits and disposition.

His accession was hailed with general satisfaction by the people, who had looked upon the two last sovereigns in a great degree as foreigners, and who were pleased at again having a prince on the throne, who, as having been born among themselves, might be expected to be free from the Hanoverian partialities which had greatly contributed to the unpopularity of his predecessors. He

* Who, in 1804, took the title of emperor of Austria, instead of that of emperor of Germany.

was not unaware of the favour which this circumstance gave him in their eyes ; and, in the speech with which, three weeks after his accession, he opened his first parliament, he alluded to it in a paragraph, which he himself had composed, and in which he avowed that, as having been " born and educated in this country, he gloried in the name of Briton."

The parliament gave abundant indications of the good will with which it looked forward to the new order of things, by the unanimity with which it voted a far larger revenue than had ever been proposed. The national debt had been greatly increased by the cost of the late campaigns, and the supplies amounted to nearly 20,000,000*l.* of money ; while the civil list was increased to 800,000*l.* a year. Even the great Jacobite families began to relax their old prejudices in favour of an English-born sovereign, and flocked to the levee, where the new king gave opportunities for drawing a further contrast between himself and his grandfather by the affability and unpretending courtesy of his behaviour. Their open adherence to the government was in some degree perhaps brought about by the introduction into the privy council of lord Bute, who was supposed, on good grounds, to have at one time viewed the claims of the Pretender with no disapproval.

The open favour which he enjoyed was the first circumstance which impaired the popularity of the new reign. It was generally imputed to an improper intimacy with the princess of Wales ; and the king had hardly been a week on the throne when the cry began to be raised against Scotch favourites, and petticoat government. Nor was Bute's own conduct calculated to allay the clamour raised against him. On the contrary, being a weak, narrow-minded man, he had no resources but a series of jobs and intrigues, in comparison with which the cabals and manœuvres of Newcastle were high-minded designs. The existing state of affairs, however, conducted him of necessity to a line of policy that might have been beneficial to the nation, had it been carried out with magnanimity and steadiness. The other secretary of state besides Pitt was lord Holderness, a nobleman distinguished neither for abilities, nor for the want of them. Bute easily persuaded the king to transfer the seals from Holderness to himself ; but the real obstacle to his supremacy was Pitt, who by the late movement had become his colleague, and who, as long as he remained in office, was sure to occupy the first place in the eyes of the nation and of Europe.

Pitt, however, was essentially a war minister ; and, in order to carry on the war with effect, he had involved the country in continental alliances, which nothing but the splendid successes of the last three years could have made tolerable to the nation. Bute now determined to re-establish peace, and to release the kingdom from

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its foreign connexions, being well assured that, in spite of the glories of the last campaigns, no measures would be more acceptable; and his views were likely to be facilitated by the unpopularity of the war in France, upon which country the chief losses had fallen, producing such severe and general distress, that the duke de Choiseul, the French minister, had openly stated his wish for peace, and had invited the belligerent powers to send plenipotentiaries to a congress at Augsburg, with a view to the termination of hostilities; while, at the same time, he sent a separate ambassador to London to arrange the colonial questions which more particularly affected France and England, and the English ministry sent one to Paris. Pitt interposed some delays, in order to give time for the reduction of Belleisle, off the coast of Brittany, the possession of which, though an island of no real value, was yet so indispensable to the French honour, that he expected to be able to exchange it for Minorca. It was taken, though not without a gallant resistance on the part of the garrison; and, about the same time, the news arrived of the fall of Pondicherry, and of a victory gained at Kirchdenkern, by Prince Ferdinand, over the prince de Soubise, in which lord Granby retrieved the English honour, which lord George Sackville's misconduct at Minden had somewhat tarnished.

But the prospect of peace, though thus promising, was broken off by the completion of the amicable arrangements between France and Spain, which, though kept as secret as possible, had been for some time the subject of negotiation between the two powers. The Spaniards fancied that they had solid grounds of complaint against England, and both Spaniards and French were offended at the high tone which Pitt, and those who were in his confidence, took with respect to every matter in dispute.

Pitt had obtained accurate information of the agreement of the two courts through marshal Keith, who, though exiled from his country for his former connexion with the Pretender, preserved so much patriotic affection for it, as led him to give the king's ministers the earliest information of the designs of its enemies, and earned, with honour to himself, the reversal of the sentence pronounced against him in former times.

The union of the two courts was placed beyond a doubt by the act of the French ambassador, M. Bussy, who presented to the English secretary a memorial from the Spanish ministers, embodying the chief grievances of which they complained. Pitt, with proper dignity, refused to receive a Spanish state paper from any hands but those of a Spanish ambassador, and, at the same time, laying before the whole cabinet a detail of the warlike preparations which Spain was making, and ample proof of those preparations

being the consequence of a secret compact with France, with which country we were at war, he urged his colleagues to consent to an immediate declaration of war against Spain, and on their refusal to agree to such a step, he and lord Temple, his brother-in-law, resigned their offices.

Their resignation left the whole power of the kingdom in Bute's hands. He was quite as timid as he was incapable; and he was now afraid of two things at once. He feared lest the people in general should resent Pitt's having been compelled to resign by his differences with his colleagues; he feared still more lest Pitt himself should show his displeasure by attacking those who remained behind; and he thought that he obviated both difficulties with great address by persuading the king to confer a peerage on Mrs. Pitt, and a pension for three lives on Pitt himself. In some respects he did not miscalculate. Pitt's enemies, and he had many, accused him openly of having sold his country; and when lord Bristol, the English ambassador at Madrid, assured the court of the pacific disposition of Spain, it was believed, even by many of his friends, that Pitt had exaggerated the danger from a fondness for war; but lord Bristol's despatch was hardly sent off when he found reason to retract his opinion. The ships which were expected, laden with the riches of the West, arrived safe in the Spanish ports; and, as soon as all danger of their being intercepted was past, the tone assumed by the Spanish ministers was more arrogant than ever. At last they ordered Bristol to leave Madrid, and at the opening of the new year war was declared.

Pitt's triumph was complete. Bute, however, pursued his plan of breaking off the foreign connexions of the kingdom, and discontinued the yearly subsidy which had been granted to Prussia; and, in the debates on the subject in the house of commons, Mr. George Grenville, though Pitt's brother-in-law, attacked the profusion with which he had carried on the German wars with great vehemence; but almost at the same time he was forced to propose a large vote of money to aid Portugal, against which France and Spain declared war, solely on the ground of her close alliance with England. Pitt supported the subsidy to Portugal, and Bute was now so confident of his power, that he ventured to deprive Newcastle of the treasury, which he took himself; Mr. George Grenville succeeded him as secretary of state; and sir Francis Dashwood, a dissolute man, not without talents, but without the slightest knowledge of business, and especially ignorant of finance, was made chancellor of the exchequer.

For a while, however, matters went on prosperously. The spirit which Pitt had infused into our naval and military services was still alive. One expedition, under general Monckton and admiral

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Rodney, took Martinico, and several of the adjacent islands; another, under lord Albemarle and sir George Pocock, reduced the Havannah; while in the East sir William Draper, with a small force, took Manilla, the chief city of the Philippine Islands, and some of the richest galleons became prizes to our cruisers. The entire loss to the Spaniards amounted to above four millions of money; and one large mass of bullion was borne in triumph through the streets of London the morning that the prince of Wales was born.

For the king had been married the preceding year to the princess Charlotte of Mecklenburgh Strelitz. It was commonly believed that he had fallen in love with lady Sarah Lennox, the beautiful sister of the duke of Richmond, and that the princess dowager, who would gladly have preserved her authority over him by keeping him single, finding that that was beyond her power, proposed the princess of Mecklenburgh to him, and that her influence and that of Bute prevailed over the king's personal predilections.

The advantages thus gained over Spain did not, however, diminish Bute's anxiety for peace; and before the end of the year, a treaty was concluded with both France and Spain, by which we restored to France most of the islands which we had taken, but retained our conquests on the American continent, while they also agreed to keep no troops, and to build no fortresses in the East Indies. They exchanged Minorca for Belleisle, and demolished the fortifications of Dunkirk. We restored Havannah to Spain, receiving Florida as a compensation for it. It cannot be said that this was a dishonourable, or a disadvantageous peace for England, though it was vehemently attacked by the minister's enemies, who were daily increasing, and though it has since been often objected to as failing to correspond to the unequalled series of victories by which the war had been distinguished. There could be no doubt of the formidable opposition which it would encounter in parliament. All the friends of Pitt, all the friends of Newcastle, all who hated Bute as a Scotchman, all who despised him for the means by which he had risen to power, those also who believed, and they were neither few nor unimportant persons, that he had been bribed with French gold to agree to such conditions, were sure to unite in condemning a measure which he was known to regard as the key-stone of his policy, while at the same time libels, lampoons, and caricatures were abundantly resorted to, to raise a feeling against him among the populace. They were easily excited. Pitt had long been their idol, and they were delighted to show their disdain of all who differed from him. Bute's name was John; so in punning derision they hoisted a jack-boot on a gallows, and committed it, often accompanied by a petticoat, as an emblem of

the princes dowager. to the flames. Bute postponed attacking his lampooners, but applied himself without delay to securing a majority in parliament to support the peace. His task was the more difficult, because the whole of his cabinet was not believed to approve of it very warmly. Mr. G. Grenville, in particular, who led the commons, was doubted; while in the lords the duke of Cumberland, the king's uncle, whose influence had increased greatly of late years, was loud in condemnation of some of the conditions. Grenville was removed from the secretaryship to the admiralty; and Fox, though still only paymaster, was admitted to the cabinet, and was entrusted with the conduct of the discussion in the lower house. He relied on two means, shameless bribery, and still more shameless intimidation. In one morning he is said to have paid 25,000*l.* for votes in the commons on this particular question. His intimidation was not confined to members of parliament. The duke of Devonshire, the lord chamberlain, was deprived of his office with circumstances of studied insult, then of his lord-lieutenancy, and the king himself ordered his name to be struck off the list of privy councillors. Several other lords-lieutenant were also dismissed; and, as the number of peers on whom the anger of the court could personally fall was limited, it descended on holders of even the most trifling situations in the government offices, for whose welfare lords hostile to peace were supposed to be solicitous. By these iniquitous methods a large majority was secured; but the feeling which they had excited had not strengthened the government, and they could not often be repeated; yet Bute's next measure provoked more hostility than even the peace. His chancellor of the exchequer proposed an excise duty on cider. It has been already related how fiercely excise duties were opposed in the time of Walpole; and the dislike of them was not abated. The outcry now raised against this tax broke up the ministry. Bute retired in alarm, and was succeeded at the treasury by Mr. Grenville, who also became chancellor of the exchequer, while Fox was made a peer, by the title of lord Holland.

Grenville's was a short-lived ministry, but his policy produced results which will never be forgotten. His efforts to crush one of the most worthless of the king's subjects ended in establishing in England the liberty of the press; his stamp act brought about the independence of America. John Wilkes, the member for Aylesbury, was a ruined profligate, of singular ugliness, of eminent wit, and of a most factious and unscrupulous spirit. His wit and licentiousness had procured him the intimacy of sir Francis Dashwood and lord Sandwich, one of the secretaries of state, and his factious spirit had recommended him to lord Temple, who had always some disreputable intrigue or other on foot, for which he wanted tools of such

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a character. On the accession of lord Bute to power Wilkes set up a paper called the "North Briton," in which the king, the queen, the princess dowager, the favourite, and the favourite's countrymen, the Scotch, were made objects of ceaseless invective and ridicule. On Bute's resignation, the "North Briton" was stopped for a short time; but a fortnight after the seals had been delivered to Grenville, a fresh number, XLV., was issued, attacking in no measured language the boasts, contained in the king's speech, of the satisfaction felt by the king of Prussia at the termination of the war, and of the obligations which he acknowledged to the English court for its exertions in his favour, while it was well known that that monarch did, in fact, look upon himself as having been deserted and betrayed by England, and that he cherished the warmest resentment against the whole country.

The number in question was far less violent than many which had preceded it, and would not at the present day excite any animadversion. A careful distinction was made between the acts of the sovereign and those of his ministers, and he himself was spoken of as "a prince of many great and amiable qualities," in order to heighten the contrast between him and those who had wrung from him "the sanction of his name to the most odious measures, and the most unjustifiable public doctrines." Bute would probably have taken no notice of the attack, but Grenville was of a fiercer disposition; contradiction provoked, opposition infuriated him. He caused Wilkes to be arrested under a general warrant directed against the authors, printers, and publishers of the "North Briton," and the secretary of state, lord Egremont, before whom he was brought, committed him to the Tower. As one of Wilkes's objects was notoriety, his spirits and his insolence rose at his treatment. On arriving at the prison he represented to the warden of the Tower, that as he had a horror of cutaneous disorders, he hoped they would not put him where any Scotchman had been imprisoned: if he might choose, he should like the cell where sir W. Wyndham (lord Egremont's father) had been confined. His daughter was at school in France, the land of lettres de cachet, and the Bastille. He wrote her a letter, and sent it open to lord Halifax, the other secretary, who found that its purport was to wish her joy of living in a free country. His martyrdom did not last long, as on suing out a habeas corpus, Pratt, the chief justice, discharged him on the ground that, as a member of parliament, he was not liable to be arrested for any offence which fell short of being a breach of the peace. The court comforted itself by removing lord Temple, who had gone to visit Wilkes in the Tower, from the lord-lieutenancy of Buckinghamshire; Wilkes himself, in his turn, assumed the offensive, instigating his printers, whose shop had been entered

under the warrant, to bring actions against the officers of the court, in which they obtained heavy damages. His personal popularity rose to an absurd height; feasts in his honour were given in the city, bonfires were kindled in the country, in which, as during the time of Bute's administration, a petticoat and jack-boot were usually committed to the flames, the solemnity being in many places superintended by a figure in a plaid and a blue riband, leading a donkey, crowned with a kingly crown, by the nose.

The representatives of the people, however, were more under Grenville's influence, having voted the obnoxious paper a scandalous and malicious libel; they expelled the author from the house of commons; and Mr. Martin, the secretary of the treasury, who had been practising at a target for nearly a year, provoked him to a duel, and wounded him severely. He retired to France, and not appearing to answer an indictment preferred against him for some of his writings, which were alleged to be indecent and profane, he was outlawed.

Still, in spite of his triumph, Grenville was not quite at his ease, and began to propose measures for strengthening his administration; while the king, who found himself now even more unpopular than he had been while Bute was in office, began to think whether he should not best consult his comfort by dismissing him. While he was in doubt, lord Egremont died suddenly, and it became necessary to decide at once. Pitt was summoned to the palace, and for a day or two there seemed a prospect of a strong administration being formed under his auspices; but some of those to whom Pitt proposed to offer the chief posts in his cabinet were particularly unacceptable to the king, who conceived his honour concerned in maintaining his objection to them, and who at last decided on retaining Grenville, permitting him to conciliate additional support to his government by conferring offices on the duke of Bedford and some of his party; but, though they had some borough influence, they brought him no accession of parliamentary ability, in which, in the house of commons especially, they were so lamentably deficient, that lord Chesterfield declared that they had not a man among them who had either abilities or words enough to call a coach.

Still, for some time things went on quietly; till, on the 5th of February, 1765, Grenville, who in the preceding year had imposed duties on several articles of American trade, proposed a long string of resolutions, asserting in general terms that "it might be proper to charge certain stamp duties" in America, such as were already payable in England. It was not a new plan. A quarter of a century before it had been suggested to Walpole, when perplexed to maintain his rapidly sinking authority; but that sagacious states-

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man was not inlinded to increase the number of his enemies by a scheme of such doubtful, and even if certain, of such insignificant advantage. "I have old England set against me already," said he to his prompter; "and do you think that I have a mind to have new England against me too?" Grenville had no such scruples; the fact of the parliament having the power to pass such resolutions was with him an argument quite conclusive. He did indeed call together the English agents of the different colonies, and told them that if they preferred any other duty to that which he had proposed, he should be happy to consult their wishes; but in spite of grave remonstrances, which proceeded from some of the most far-sighted of the body, he would listen to no objection which threatened to interfere with his project of, in some way or other, aiding the English exchequer by a revenue to be derived from America.

In England the measure attracted but little notice; but in America it produced at once the most violent excitement and the most determined resistance. Happily, before the news of the feelings thus awakened in America reached England, the ministry had irrevocably alienated the king, and had been forced to give way to wiser men. The king had been seized with a severe illness, and as the prince of Wales was an infant, the possibility of the recurrence of such an event with a fatal result suggested the necessity of appointing a regency. The king desired to be invested with the power of naming the regent himself; but Grenville feared that, if unfettered, he would appoint the princess dowager, and that the consequence would be the revival of all Bute's authority. He accordingly procured the insertion of a clause restricting the king's choice to the royal family; and then, under pretence that the princess was so unpopular that there was reason to apprehend that the house of commons would except her by name (the bill had been introduced in the house of lords), he induced the king to consent to a further proviso, naming as the only persons capable of being appointed, the queen, and those descendants of George II. usually resident in England. It was well known, however, that the king had been greatly grieved at the consent thus extorted from him; and the opposition, who, though they bore the princess and Bute no good will, hated Grenville far more, willingly supported her friends in the house of commons in a formal motion to add her name to the list, which was carried by a great majority. It was now plain to the king that the ministry was not as strong as he had fancied; dangerous riots, too, had broken out among the Spital-fields weavers, in consequence of the rejection of a bill to raise the duty on foreign silks; and the duke of Bedford, who had been pelted in the streets, and who had been forced to summon the aid of soldiers to protect his house, openly accused lord Bute to the

king of being the chief instigator of the tumults. The king determined to get rid of a ministry which had friends among no class of the community, and applied to his uncle, the duke of Cumberland, to aid him in treating with those statesmen whose aid this resolution rendered necessary. The duke had, on more than one occasion, vigorously opposed the measures of the former ministers; but he was more offended still at the treatment which his nephew had received from Grenville, and willingly undertook the task imposed upon him. He again applied to Pitt; and Pitt's warmest admirers are forced to admit that his conduct was wholly inexcusable. The entire interests of the state were offered to his guidance. He might have been minister himself; he might have made any one else minister. Unhappily, he suffered himself to be influenced by lord Temple, for whom he had, in reality, no great respect, but to whom he considered himself under great obligations, and who, having lately become reconciled to his brother Grenville, from whom he had long been estranged, thought, by preventing any arrangement at the moment, ultimately to reduce the king to an entire dependence on the united power of himself and his family. After much negotiation, Pitt refused all the duke's offers. Again the king was forced to announce his intention to keep Grenville, and Grenville, always peremptory and uncourtly, now feeling the more assured of the permanence of his power, from this second failure of an attempt to get rid of him, became more peremptory and uncourtly than ever. Once again the king besought the aid of his uncle; and now, hopeless of any assistance from Pitt, the duke had recourse to the other heads of the Whig party, though death had lately deprived them of most of those members of their body who had any extensive official or parliamentary experience.

The chief of them was the marquis of Rockingham, a nobleman in the prime of life, of unblemished character, and though not endowed with brilliant genius, eminently possessed of practical good sense, judgment, and discretion, and of that most invaluable quality in the head of a party, the art of preserving the confidence and attachment of his followers. His talents had hitherto been concealed from public notice by his delicate health, and by a sort of constitutional shyness, which prevented him from putting himself forward as a public speaker, but his merits had not escaped the notice of his friends; and when, on the death of lord Egremont, the king first applied to Mr. Pitt to undertake the government, he was surprised to find that Pitt proposed to place lord Rockingham at the head of the admiralty, and that he considered him one of the best men of business in the kingdom. He had now to learn that Pitt's judgment was correct, and was widely shared by his whole party. The marquis was not eager for office; but he ac-

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cepted it in consideration of the manifest difficulty in which the king was placed. He became first lord of the treasury, the duke of Newcastle had the privy seal, the duke of Grafton and general Conway were the secretaries of state, and Mr. Dowdeswell was the chancellor of the exchequer; but the real mainstay of the ministry was the prime minister's private secretary, Edmund Burke, who now entered parliament under his auspices, and supported all its measures with a richness of argumentative eloquence, with a variety of knowledge, an amplitude of theoretical wisdom, and an acuteness of practical sagacity, all and each of them then, and ever since, unequalled in a deliberative assembly.

On the 8th of July the new ministry entered office, and before they could meet parliament, they lost a most important support in the duke of Cumberland, who died suddenly at the beginning of the autumn. He had outlived the unpopularity of his earlier years, and was now so sincerely regretted, that Walpole remarks that the middle and lower orders wore mourning for him longer than was enjoined by the Gazette. To lord Rockingham his loss was most serious, as the duke having negotiated his acceptance of office, was by that fact pledged to support him, and his support was much more to be relied on than that of the king, who was known to have accepted his new ministers unwillingly, though no one yet suspected the course which he was about to allow his original prejudice against them to adopt.

Although Bute no longer exerted any personal interference in state affairs, he had still many friends left in subordinate offices, who derived from him a knowledge, or at least a strong suspicion of the king's inclination, and who now formed the centre of a faction, contemptible for every thing but numbers, who gave themselves the name of "the king's friends," and who, seeing the frequent changes of administration which of late had taken place, and foreseeing the probability of many more, hoped, under pretence of loyalty, to render their own tenure of office independent of all ministers. They had no personal intimacy with the king; they did not even wish for any. Their whole scheme was based on an idea which could only be realized by a shameful departure from the principles of the constitution, that the king would often wish to give an underhand opposition to measures proposed by his ministers, to which he had been forced to give a formal consent, and that he might find, or expect to find, his advantage in their defeat. They had discerned, or they had been taught, that he had a high notion of his own prerogative, and that he was not at all inclined to acquiesce in the constitutional view of his position, according to which the measures for which his ministers were responsible were entitled to support as long as they remained his ministers. Those ministers

he had the right of choosing, though the power of the house of commons over the supplies in effect gave them a veto on their appointment, which made the exercise of his choice depend on the parliament for its ratification. He could not, therefore, be at variance with his ministers while they were supported by parliament, without also being at variance with the parliament; and yet the object of these men was to render and to keep him at variance with them.

It is impossible to avoid blaming the king himself very severely for consenting to be led into such an unconstitutional and faithless line of conduct; but his education had been grossly neglected by his mother, and by those whom she placed about him. He had not yet emancipated his mind from the practical lessons of evil he had learnt from her and her favourite; and the first few years of his reign present a striking contrast to those of his riper age, when he earned the affectionate respect of the whole nation by his straightforward honesty and sincerity, and also by the admirable example set by himself and by his consort of discountenancing vice and irreligion, and rendering the royal palace a model for every home in the kingdom. But at the period of which we are speaking, he not only treated his ministers with insincerity, but gave ample grounds for the complaint that, though not in the least inclined to vice or profligacy himself, the most open practice of every kind of irregularity was no bar to his favour.

It is from the accession of lord Rockingham's first ministry to office that we may date the comparative purity of English politics. Till that time no government for many years had attempted to stand except by the corruption of its supporters. Even Pitt connived at the bribery openly practised by his colleagues; and, not content with bribing others, many ministers had been shamefully corrupt themselves. Not to go back to the old days of Craggs and Aislaby, even Grenville had obtained grants and reversions of which he was so much ashamed, that he actually procured them to be made out under another name, and had made his own cook serve him five years for an office in the treasury; while lord Halifax had openly sold the employments in his gift, and had shared the price with his mistress; but now no member was made richer by his support of the cabinet; no minister sought illegal gains for himself: they came into office, it may almost be said reluctantly, with the sole object of serving their country, and they permitted no selfish views to interfere with that object.

From the first, however, they were surrounded with difficulties, many of them owing to the capricious and factious conduct of Pitt, which his panegyrists excuse by alleging, probably with some truth, that ill health had at this time so undermined his constitution,

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that he was already feeling the approach of that nervous malady which a year or two afterwards for a while wholly disabled him from attending to business. No one was more clearly bound to afford lord Rockingham a frank and cordial support than he. Lord Rockingham agreed with him in nearly every point of politics; had sedulously attended to his supposed wishes by appointing some of his friends to office, and by offering posts to others; and had only become the minister in consequence of his refusal; yet Pitt's attitude towards him was from the very first distrustful and hostile. He dissuaded those of his friends who consulted him from joining the ministry; and on the very first day he appeared in parliament he proclaimed, with ostentatious metaphor, that they had no share in his confidence; but on the only subject on which he could contrive to differ from them, his warmest advocates are compelled to pronounce him entirely wrong, both in point of constitutional law, and of common sense.

Before the parliament met, news arrived of the angry feelings which Grenville's stamp act had excited in America; but even before the receipt of this intelligence the ministry had determined to repeal the act. The king was exceedingly averse to such a measure; and, though the ministers had no suspicion of such a step, actually began a negotiation with Grenville and the duke of Bedford, to return to office, while at the very same time he was writing notes to lord Rockingham, condemning the factious opposition which Grenville was offering him. The houses had met before Christmas, 1765; but the first great debate took place in January. Grenville wished the commons to brand the colonies as rebellious, and the whole force of the opposition attacked the ministers for pusillanimity in being afraid to give their conduct its right name. Pitt had prescribed to himself a difficult and discreditable part. He could not oppose the ministers, and he would not support them. He tried to sneer them down as unworthy of his confidence (forgetting how lately he had spoken to the king in the highest terms of the capacity of their chief), and then proceeded to deny that the parliament had the power to tax America, because America was not represented. Nothing but the grossest ignorance of constitutional law could have induced him to promulgate so absurd a doctrine; but Pitt often made it a boast that he did not draw his principles from books; in fact, his information on every subject was extremely limited. His own sister declared that he knew nothing well but the Fairy Queen; and George II. had often complained of being forced to submit to the dictation of a minister who had never read Vattel. It is quite evident that in strictness of law the parliament is supreme, and that its authority to make laws of every description necessarily included a power of taxation.

The ministers never doubted the power, but they denied the wisdom of exercising it in a manner for which there was no precedent. With as little delay as possible Conway brought in a bill to repeal the stamp act, accompanied by a declaration of the full right and power of Great Britain to bind America in all cases whatever. He enforced his proposal by a consideration, not merely of the disturbances which the act had caused in America, but of the injury which those disturbances had inflicted on our domestic trade, and prophesied, with a foresight which subsequent events proved only too accurate, that if we persevered in maintaining the tax, and the Americans in resisting it, France and Spain would surely take part with America.

Lord Rockingham has been blamed for insisting on the assertion of the power of parliament to impose such a tax, while repealing the tax itself; but the maintenance of the theoretical power was indispensable, in order to obtain the king's assent to the repeal. The colonists themselves did not in general object to the assertion of the right; nor was any ill feeling produced by it. They felt that their happiness depended not on the statement or denial of an abstract principle, but on the enforcement or non-enforcement of a real grievance. They looked on the repeal of the act as a practical proof that England was wiser than she had been, was content to adhere to precedents, and to the system under which they and their ancestors had flourished, and the real patriots on each side of the Atlantic were too sensible to wish to prolong discussions on the compatibility of the freedom of the colonies with the supremacy of the mother country, which if carried too far might prove dangerous to both.

In the first division which took place, the majority in favour of the repeal was so great that the success of the bill was assured in the house of commons. The lobbies and all the approaches to the house were crowded with American merchants, eager to obtain the earliest information of their fate, who now, by the tumultuous joy which they testified, plainly showed how far they were from desiring to separate their interests from those of England. As the leading members who had supported their cause came out, they expressed their joy in vociferous cheers. Conway was greeted with huzzas, and thanks, and blessings; but when Pitt appeared, the whole crowd rent the air with acclamations, with which many of them escorted him to his own door. The bill had equal success in the upper House, in spite of the king's friends, who were expressly told by his majesty that they might vote against it without losing their places. On the 18th of March it received the royal assent, and was hailed in America with an unanimous burst of thankfulness and exultation.

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Still, in spite of his success, lord Rockingham felt that he held his power by a precarious tenure, and sought to strengthen his position by obtaining the accession of Pitt. Almost immediately after the opening of parliament he had made formal overtures to him to accept office with the lead in the ministry, and he now repeated them, but in vain. Pitt kept haughtily aloof, refusing all their offers, but giving no reason, except his objection to serve with the duke of Newcastle, with whom not many years before he had entered into a close and willing coalition.

An union with Pitt would have established the ministry in the confidence of the nation ; but if they had known the truth, they would have been aware that the enemy to be gained over was not the people, but the king, who looked up on the repeal of the stamp act as an abandonment of his prerogative, and bore the deepest resentment against those who had insisted on it, which at the same time he disguised by studiously civil and friendly language, writing to lord Rockingham, that " a steady perseverance, unattended by heat, would overcome all opposition, even in parliament ;" and at the same time encouraging his " friends " to oppose the ministry on all occasions, and refusing to let them be turned out in spite of lord Rockingham's earnest, and at times indignant remonstrances. In spite of all their difficulties the ministry went on steadily in the path of usefulness which they had chalked out for themselves. They repealed the excise duty on cider ; they carried a resolution declaring the illegality of general warrants. At the same time they conducted the foreign affairs of the kingdom with skill and success ; they induced France to complete the engagements into which she had entered at the late peace, and they made an advantageous commercial treaty with Russia ; but the ill will of the king towards them became every day more undisguised. Pitt, who had apparently been already in secret communication with the court, again began to be eager for office, and would not submit to what he fancied the condescension of joining an existing ministry. He determined to overthrow them if possible ; and on their proposing a trifling reduction in the militia, he made a furious speech, declaring that he would go to the furthest corner of the island to overturn any ministry who were enemies to the militia. He had also had secret conferences with the chancellor, lord Northington, whom lord Rockingham, had, rather unwisely, retained in office, with the view of conciliating the king, who was known to regard him with special favour. He had been caballing against them during the whole period of their official existence, and now he was anxious to undermine them, provided he could secure for himself a less laborious place in the next government ; and this Pitt was willing to promise him, though there was not one single point of politics on

which the two were agreed. For instance, on the stamp act, Pitt had been for the repeal, and against the assertion of the right to tax, while Northington had done his best to defeat the repeal, and in support of the assertion of the right to tax, had made so intemperate a speech as greatly to disgust some Americans who were present, and to alarm all moderate people.

The state of affairs was too notorious to escape the eyes even of foreigners. The Russian ambassador wrote to his court not to commit themselves with the present government, as they had not the king's confidence, and could not stand. The letter fell into lord Rockingham's hands, who showed it to the king. The king assured him that he had his entire confidence, and caressed him and Dowdeswell at court to such a degree as greatly to alarm lord Temple, who was looking forward to succeeding him. At last the chancellor found an opportunity of delivering a fatal blow. Grenville's government had, very unwisely, established the English laws in full force in Canada, a measure which had naturally produced great confusion among a people whose language and habits were wholly different from those of the English; and lord Northington, who was ill with the gout, pretending to fancy that he had been insulted by the cabinet on one occasion meeting to deliberate on the subject in his absence, rose from his sick bed, and hastening to the king's presence, resigned the seals into his hand. The king, without making the slightest communication to the rest of the government, wrote with his own hand a letter to Mr. Pitt; and thus the ministry were unceremoniously and discourteously dismissed, a year all but one day after they had entered upon office.

CHAPTER LX.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

IT was not to be expected that Pitt would find it very easy to construct his intended government. A short time before he had described himself as having but four friends in one house, and five in the other; and his task was rendered more difficult by a quarrel which he had with lord Temple, who had expected to be the first lord of the treasury. Lord Rockingham, too magnanimous to show any resentment at the unworthy treatment he had experienced, persuaded Conway and others of his friends to remain in office; and at last a ministry was formed, com-

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posed of men of the most discordant parties and most incompatible opinions. Some years afterwards, Burke described it as "an administration so chequered and speckled, a piece of joinery so crossly indented and whimsically dovetailed, a cabinet so variously inlaid, such a piece of diversified mosaic, such a tessellated pavement without cement, here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white, patriots and courtiers, king's friends and republicans, Whigs and Tories, treacherous friends and open enemies, that it was indeed a very curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch and unsure to stand upon." Pitt took the privy seal himself, with the title of earl of Chatham, the duke of Grafton had the treasury, Mr. Charles Townsend, a man of great abilities, but of fickle and rash disposition, was made chancellor of the exchequer, Conway continued secretary of state with lord Shelburne for his colleague, a man of considerable abilities, but with a character for insincerity which grew day by day more confirmed, till it procured him the nickname of Malagrida, from a noted Spanish jesuit. Lord Camden became lord chancellor, lord Northington president of the council, while the paymaster's place was given to lord North, who soon rose to a more conspicuous situation.

It was soon apparent, however, that the new ministry would not enjoy all the popularity on which it had reckoned, and this want of favour was owing to a most unreasonable outcry against Pitt's acceptance of a peerage: that, as regards the strength of the ministry, it was an impolitic step, may be granted, and as such his colleagues viewed it, feeling that it was in the commons that his fame had been made, and that it was in that assembly that his eloquence would have been of the greatest service to them; but as regards himself, he had certainly fairly earned his honours; and though he was not an old man, his constitution was now so much impaired, that the retirement to the more quiet atmosphere of the house of lords was indispensable to the preservation of his health, perhaps of his life. Yet the discontent at his elevation was universal. The city had been preparing to celebrate his return to power by a general illumination, but the moment that his acceptance of a peerage was known, all idea of such a display was laid aside, and it is probable that the annoyance felt by the new peer at the dissatisfaction thus expressed at his elevation, may have had no slight share in producing in him that nervous and irritable state of mind which was soon visible in all his actions.

His first administration had been glorious beyond all precedent. his second was full of disgrace and disaster. He began by announcing that the principles of his ministry were the same as those of lord Rockingham's, though why, if such were the case, he had behaved with such hostility to lord Rockingham he forbore to

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explain. He then proceeded to disgust his colleagues and supporters by treating them with the most extraordinary haughtiness ; so that on one occasion even Conway, a man of singularly equable temper, was provoked into declaring that such language as his had never been heard west of Constantinople ; and at the same time he showed that he was not by any means fit to manage the existing affairs of the kingdom without their assistance. His first administration was a time of war : and in war, the originality and boldness of his designs, and the unfaltering resolution with which he pressed them forward, qualified him to shine as he had then done ; but the present was a time of peace, and it was soon plain that to such a state of things his talents were far less suited. He resumed his plan of a great northern confederacy against the house of Bourbon, but he mismanaged his diplomatic arrangements so as to lose the alliance of Austria, and to offend Russia, without conciliating Prussia ; while at home he excited considerable opposition by his conduct with respect to the corn trade. The harvest had been scanty over the whole of Europe, and, as the price of corn was higher on the Continent than in England, it was believed that the merchants were preparing to export large quantities of grain ; serious apprehensions of scarcity were entertained, which in some counties gave rise to formidable riots. Lord Chatham at once issued an order in council laying an embargo on corn ; a measure which was, perhaps, justifiable under the circumstances, though wholly unprecedented in a time of peace ; but one which certainly required the instant sanction of parliament. At the same time he refused to anticipate the meeting of parliament ; and when the houses did meet, he maintained that the order in council was no illegal extension of the prerogative, and was seconded by the lord president and the lord chancellor in intemperate and indiscreet speeches. The law, however, was so plainly laid down by the chief justice, lord Mansfield, that the assertion could not be maintained, and the ministers, though unwillingly, were forced to confess that the measure had been illegal, and to consent to a bill of indemnity, which the opposition were quite willing to grant. He next began to consider the affairs of the East India Company, whose existing charter was near its end, and with whom he was desirous to make a bargain more advantageous to the public than had hitherto been made, even if he did not decide on claiming for the crown a great portion of the Company's recent territorial conquests. But he refused to give his colleagues the slightest intimation of his views, and before he could mature them, he was taken ill, and retired into the country, becoming quite incapable of attending to any kind of business ; though it was some time before he resigned his office.

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His illness brought out all the evils of the singular system, or rather want of system, on which he had composed his ministry. His colleagues, some of them previously strangers to each other, and some even notoriously at variance with each other in their political sentiments, could only be kept in any kind of harmony by his controlling hand, and by the confidence they all felt in his genius. Some resigned, more talked of resigning; and even those who as yet remained had but little hope of being long able to carry on the government; lord Northington openly saying that there were four parties in the parliament, and that that of the ministers was the weakest of the four.

The knowledge of their weakness and disunion gave strength and encouragement to the opposition; and, on a division on the amount of the land-tax to be voted, the ministers were beaten by a majority of 18, being the first defeat on a money bill that any government had received since the revolution; and Townsend's desire to make up for the loss of revenue, on which he had calculated from this source, led him to disregard not only the warning that the history of the stamp act afforded, but the avowed principles of nearly all his colleagues who had joined in the repeal of that measure, and he brought in a bill to lay a tax on tea, glass, and other articles, to be paid as import duties in America. The insignificance of the impost enabled him to carry his proposal, in spite of a vigorous opposition by the late government, led by Burke, who warned him in prophetic language that what would be considered in America was not the amount of the tax, but the principle on which it was exacted.

The moment that the parliament was prorogued the duke of Grafton resigned the treasury, which was offered to lord Rockingham, but, unhappily for the nation, the negotiations for the formation of a new ministry failed, partly owing to the intrigues of lord Rockingham's secret enemies or rivals, and partly owing to the insincerity of the king, who ultimately retained the duke of Grafton as his prime minister, and subsequently owned (if we may trust Walpole) that he had never really intended to part with him.

The new taxes excited strong feelings of resentment and resistance in America. At Boston, where the commissioners appointed to collect them landed, serious riots took place, which were aggravated by the imprudence of the governor of Massachusetts, Mr. Bernard. The duke of Grafton became alarmed, and proposed to repeal Townsend's bill, but was overruled in the cabinet. Townsend himself had died suddenly in the autumn, and had been succeeded at the exchequer by lord North; Conway had retired, by which the moderate party in the cabinet lost one vote; and a third secretary of state was now added, for the affairs of the colonies;

the earl of Hillsborough, by a not very fortunate exercise of judgment, being selected for that office.

In the winter the parliament was dissolved, and, as if the discontent which they had excited in the colonies was not by itself sufficiently embarrassing, the ministers proceeded to involve themselves in a quarrel with all the constituencies in England by a flagrant violation of the rights of one of those bodies. Wilkes had lately returned to the country, and, at the general election, had been elected member for Middlesex, and had been made an alderman of the city of London, though almost immediately after his election he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment on account of the prosecution formerly instituted against him; and again the government procured his expulsion from the house of commons. He was unanimously re-elected, a step which there was no law to prevent, but which provoked the ministers to propose a resolution that, having been expelled, he was incapable of being re-elected to the same parliament. It was to no purpose that Burke and his party pointed out that to attempt to act upon such a resolution was to make a vote of one house of parliament equal to a law. The resolution was carried by a triumphant majority; but Wilkes was equally victorious on the hustings, and was again returned by an enormous majority over colonel Luttrell, whom the government had persuaded to stand, and whom they now induced the house to declare duly elected. The whole kingdom was roused by this unexampled interference with the right of election; petitions poured in from every quarter begging the king to dissolve the parliament; while the general feeling was further shown by the result of an action which Wilkes brought against the secretary of state for seizing his papers under the general warrant originally issued against him, when the jury gave him the enormous damages of 4000*l*.

This error provoked the opposition to repeated attacks upon the ministers, which were led by Burke, who, in the harangues with which he thundered against them and their successors, made party warfare serve a purpose beyond the present time by the large principles of universal justice and wisdom on which he rested his cause, illustrating them by the most brilliant imagery, the most varied learning, and the closest argument that was ever employed to convince an unwilling audience. He did almost greater service with his pen, appealing to the public out of doors by a succession of pamphlets, adorned by the same characteristics in such profusion, that they have furnished, as it were, an armoury from which succeeding political writers have constantly drawn the most effective of their weapons. It was an age of pamphlets, and one set of political writings, the Letters of Junius, excited an interest above all others of the same class, not so much from the ability

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displayed in them, though they exhibited great vigour of expression, and a considerable mastery over the language, as from their unparalleled rancour and utter unscrupulousness, and still more from the mystery which was observed respecting their authorship, and which was such that the very publisher is believed to have been ignorant of the name of the writer, though they have now for many years been known to be the work of Mr. afterwards sir Philip Francis.*

At the beginning of the year 1770 lord Chatham, having entirely recovered from his maladies, resumed his attendance in parliament, uniting, as he ought to have done long before, with lord Rockingham and his party. The duke of Grafton, who had had great difficulty in maintaining his position before, was quite unable to face his enemies when reinforced in such a manner, and, being weary of the labours of office, and disgusted with many of his colleagues, gladly retired from the treasury, and was succeeded by lord North, who, though unwilling to place himself in so prominent a position, yielded his scruples to the personal request of the king, who pressed it with extraordinary earnestness as the only alternative which could save him from the necessity of applying to lord Chatham and lord Rockingham, against whom his prejudices had been greatly increased by their opposition to the measures adopted against Wilkes, in whose disgrace his majesty constantly evinced a strong personal interest.

Nor could George III. have found any minister better suited to his own purpose of resisting the claims of America, and of keeping out the statesmen who had become obnoxious to him; for lord North had skill as a financier, fertility of resource, patience, eloquence, and especial readiness as a debater; firmness, in the best sense of the word, he had not, for he permitted his exaggerated feelings of loyalty to lead him to advocate and to conduct measures of which he disapproved; but, when his line of conduct, however erroneous, was taken, he showed the greatest resolution and address in adhering to it. He had wit that never deserted him, and that enabled him often to turn the laugh against his opponents; and a good humour, proof at all times against the ridicule, the scorn, and the fierce invective with which he was for years assailed by an opposition led by some of the mightiest chiefs of parliamentary oratory.

* It is from no love of paradox that the writer asserts his opinion that the Letters of Junius are more overrated than almost any work in the language; and that they owe their chief reputation to the last of the ones mentioned above. No doubt they are at times written with power; but, on the other hand, many of the most quoted passages are very feeble. To take one instance, there has probably been no sentence of them oftener cited as a specimen of severe sarcasm than that about Wedderburne: "There is something about him which even treachery cannot trust." Even lord Campbell mentions it as a most stinging epigram. A very little reflection would have shown him that it is mere nonsense. The very last qualification which one would ascribe to treachery is a proneness to trust others. Honesty is unsuspicious, but treachery dares confide in no one.

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The change of ministers did not appease the opposition. It was soon apparent that no change of measures was contemplated. The new minister did indeed propose to repeal all the American taxes imposed by Townsend, except that on tea. Burke, as the leader of his party, insisted on including the duty on tea, but the ministers carried their proposal. For a while the partial relief thus granted had its effect, in producing hesitation on the part of many of the more moderate Americans to agitate the country for an impost so trifling as that which remained, and which was productive of no practical hardship, since, the English export duty having been removed, tea was actually cheaper than it had been before; but when, in 1773, an act was passed, allowing the East India Company a drawback on the tea imported to America, it armed with a stronger weapon those more far-sighted patriots who had objected to the principle asserted in the preamble of the act which granted the tax, and kindled the flame of resistance till it spread from one end of America to the other.

For a year or two affairs in England went on so quietly as to afford no subject for a historian, except the passing of the royal marriage act. The king had been greatly offended at two of his brothers, the duke of Gloucester and the duke of Cumberland, having married subjects, lady Waldegrave, a grand-daughter of the first lord Orford, and Mrs. Horton, a sister of colonel Luttrell; and, to prevent the recurrence of such misalliances, the ministers introduced a bill to prohibit any descendant of George II. from marrying without the king's consent under the age of twenty-five. The king's dislike of lord Rockingham was not diminished by the vigorous opposition which his party in both houses gave to the proposed bill, which was very unpopular with the nation; but it was carried, and produced a slight division in the ministry, as Charles James Fox, in subsequent years the celebrated leader of the Whig party, who, though a very young man, had already been made a lord of the admiralty, resigned his office in order to vote against it, thus laying the foundation of the dislike which the king ever afterwards entertained to him; for George III. had given public notice that he looked on the bill as a matter in which he was personally interested, adding the very unconstitutional threat that he would remember those who opposed it. After the passing of the bill Fox rejoined the ministry, but was soon dismissed by lord North at the king's suggestion; and his dismissal was fortunate for his subsequent career and reputation, as it left him at liberty, when the news of the disturbances at Boston arrived, to unite with lord Rockingham's party in their opposition to the penal measures introduced by his late colleagues.

The marquis de Montcalm had prophesied that if England suc-

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ceeded in conquering Canada, that acquisition would be more than counterbalanced by the extent to which it would weaken the dependence on her of her own American colonies, and the ministers were now hastening to realize their enemy's prophecy. The Americans had other causes of discontent with the homegovernment, arising chiefly from the indifferent character of many of the officers sent out from England, and from the neglect with which their representations were generally treated; but all were now merged in the one great grievance of taxation. At first the opposition broke out in fierce riots, but it was soon more regularly organized by formally appointed committees; and, though as yet the bulk of the population was loyal to the crown, a democratic party was already forming, eager to trample the old prejudices and old institutions under foot, and to render America independent; and the course of events added to their side the most influential Americans in England. Dr. Franklin, a native of Boston, and a man of great eminence in the scientific world, was at this time residing in London as the agent for Massachusetts. He had taken a decided part in the agitation against the imposition of taxes on America, without as yet relaxing his feelings of loyal attachment to the mother country, or entertaining any views beyond those of procuring the re-establishment of the former principles of government. But in the year 1773 he obtained possession, in some mysterious manner, of some letters written by the governor and lieutenant-governor of his native province, in which they advocated the employment of severe measures of coercion against the colony. He sent them to America, where they were published by the assembly of Massachusetts, which founded on them a petition to the king to recall the writers. When the petition came before the privy council, Wedderburne, the solicitor-general, inveighed with the greatest bitterness against Franklin for his violation of the sacredness of private correspondence. Franklin refused to explain how he had become possessed of the letters, and pretended to regard the reproaches levelled at him, and the exultation with which they were received by the audience, with contempt; but in reality they kindled in his breast a hatred of England, from which he never swerved, and a determination to do all in his power to separate his country from her dominion.

The petition had hardly been rejected when news arrived of fresh riots in Boston; on the arrival of some vessels laden with the tea which was to be subject to the duty, a mob disguised as native Indians had boarded the vessels, thrown the tea into the sea, and defied all attempts to discover the leaders in this outrage upon the laws. The indignation which the news excited in the breasts of the ministers was equal to that of the Americans at the tax; and

in March, 1774, lord North brought forward a bill to deprive Boston for a time of all its privileges as a port, till the citizens should make compensation to the East India Company for the tea which had been destroyed, and till they should re-establish order and tranquillity in their city; another bill authorized the governor to send any persons to England for trial who might be accused of having borne a part in the disturbances; while a third established a new system of government in Massachusetts. All these bills were vigorously opposed, by some persons on narrow grounds, or because of objection to some of their details; but by Burke on the wiser principle that the only measures which could be effectual to regain the affection of the colonies must be those of conciliation rather than of coercion. Others of the colonies soon showed their sympathy with Massachusetts; the bill for disfranchising Boston was received in America with general indignation; it was printed with a black border, and in many other towns the 1st of June, on which it was to come into operation, was observed as a day of public mourning.

The opposition to the English government was rapidly assuming a dangerous degree of organization; corresponding committees were formed in several provinces, and in September a general congress met at Philadelphia, to deliberate on the line of conduct to be pursued. In imitation of the English parliament of 1688, the members drew up a declaration of rights; and then, pronouncing that these rights had been violated by the imposition of taxes by the English parliament, they came to a resolution to cease to import English goods after September, 1775, unless, in the mean time, the laws of which they complained should be repealed by the English parliament.

The news of these measures alarmed those far-sighted statesmen who led the opposition, and none more than Burke. In the year 1774 he had supported a motion of Mr. Rose Fuller for the repeal of the obnoxious duty, and this year, acting in apparent concert with lord Chatham, who introduced in the house of lords a bill which he had prepared after careful consultation with Franklin, repealing all the recent acts of parliament relating to America, and seeking to engage the Americans of their own accord to grant an annual sum in aid of the English revenue, he, a week or two afterwards in the lower house, moved a series of resolutions of nearly the same purport. For some time these two great men acted in strict harmony in this cause; no eloquence could surpass the fiery declamation with which Chatham upheld the cause of constitutional freedom in America, and thundered against the ministers who were thus driving an entire nation into rebellion; nor have uninspired lips ever poured forth lessons of more profound and

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magnanimous wisdom than those with which Burke urged the claims of justice and humanity, and sought to restore the blessings of peace to the parent and child thus unhappily disunited. But their efforts were in vain; the ministers, who opposed Chatham's bill and Burke's resolutions, defeated them by a large majority in both houses; and a resolution carried by lord North so clearly made all conciliatory measures in England depend on the previous submission of the Americans, as rather to add fuel to the flame than to quench it.

It is possible that lord North would have consented to more moderate measures, but he was overruled by the king himself, whose personal feelings were embarked in what he fancied the proper maintenance of his legal prerogative, and who, in his private letters to his minister, insisted on continuing one tax to keep up the right, and expressed a decided opinion that on the display of a proper firmness by the government, the Americans would submit.

He was fated to be rudely undeceived. In April an armed force collected at Lexington, fired on a detachment sent by general Gage to destroy some military stores collected at a place called Concord; the next month a body of volunteers surprised a British post at Ticonderoga; and a week or two afterwards the congress formally threw down the gauntlet to Great Britain, assuming for the provinces which had sent members to their assembly the title of the United Colonies, passing an unanimous vote that they should be put in a state of defence, issuing paper money on the credit of the congress, levying large bodies of men, and appointing colonel George Washington commander-in-chief of the troops then employed in the neighbourhood of Boston, and of all other armies hereafter to be raised in North America. Their choice does no small honour to their discernment and moderation, and contributed in no small degree to their success in the coming struggle.

Washington was now forty-three years of age, and possessed of the rarest virtues which have ever won an immortality of glory; yet he was not gifted with any very remarkable capacity for war, nor in a more mature age did he display any very eminent statesman-like or legislative genius; but he was endowed with unswerving practical common sense, with a force of character which, at the very commencement of these struggles, pointed him out to his fellows as the fittest man to command and control them, and with a magnanimity and moral greatness which preserved him in his steadfastness of purpose undismayed by difficulty and disaster, and, what is rarer still, unaltered by success, and uncorrupted by the gratitude of his countrymen, and by the admiring language of the

world at large ; which can boast indeed of more elegant orators, of more invincible warriors, of more profound statesmen, but of no more disinterested patriot, of no citizen of a better regulated ambition, of more equal and unshaken virtue, than the founder and first governor of the republic of America.

[CHAPTER LXI.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

THAT most terrible of contests, civil war, was again, after an interval of 130 years, to convulse the kingdom ; for, though waged on a continent far removed from the shores of Britain, the struggle with America was to all intents and purposes a civil war. Not only did numbers of the Americans still possess property and near kinsmen in Britain, but many of the officers afterwards most distinguished in the service were themselves natives of this country, and held commissions in the British army. at this time, when the very same violation of the principles of the constitution which had cost Charles his life, namely, the imposition of taxes which had not been granted by the representatives of those who were taxed, was about to cost George III. the fairest portion of his colonial dominions. Nor, though the error is chiefly to be attributed to the rashness of the ministers and to the pertinacity of the sovereign, was the nation at large free from blame, since it is certain that the original imposition of taxes on America was in accordance with the general feeling ; and that, when the news of her resistance arrived, the measures of coercion and punishment which were proposed by the ministers were approved of by a large majority of every class of Englishmen.

It is very remarkable, considering the military renown of the nation, and the unsurpassed genius which so many of our commanders have displayed when called upon to encounter a foreign enemy, that neither of the civil wars which stain the modern history of England (in the time of the Roses war had hardly become a science) was signalized by any great achievements of military skill ; and that, in this respect, the war of which we are speaking was even inferior to that which was carried on in our own island.

In June, 1775, general Gage, the British commander-in-chief, occupied Boston with about 10,000 men. Even before the appointment of Washington he was blockaded by an American force of

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nearly double that number; and a height commanding a portion of the town, and known as Bunker's Hill, was the scene of the first regular battle between the two armies. The Americans had thrown up some intrenchments on the more advanced of two ridges into which the hill was divided; and, on the afternoon of the 17th of June, Gage sent general Howe with 2000 men to dislodge them. Some of the circumstances of this battle gave a sad omen of the blunders which were fated to distinguish the whole conduct of the war. Not only were the troops, though only marching out of the town to which they were to return at night, encumbered with their knapsacks, and with the additional load of three days' provisions; but the field-pieces with which they were furnished, when the moment for using them arrived, were found to be provided only with cannon-balls of too large a calibre, so that they were entirely useless. In spite of all their difficulties the troops gallantly ascended the hill. The Americans fought bravely, and received them with a most destructive fire; but at last they were driven from their stronghold at the point of the bayonet, though, from having been sheltered behind their fortifications, the loss which they had inflicted on their assailants nearly doubled that which they themselves sustained.

But, though thus resolute in their resistance, the Americans had not yet given up hope of reconciliation with England. The very next month the congress signed a petition to the king, entreating him to facilitate such an end; but the bearer, Mr. Penn, was informed that no answer would be given to it, on the ground that the congress was not assembled by the king's authority, and that it had authorized an appeal to arms. This disdainful and impolitic treatment of a petition which, from the spirit that had prompted it, deserved a better reception, greatly embittered the feelings of the Americans, without strengthening the minister at home; on the contrary, it produced fresh divisions in the cabinet, which the duke of Grafton now finally quitted; and as lord Dartmouth, who had replaced lord Hillsborough as secretary for the colonies, now became lord privy seal, he was succeeded in his secretaryship by lord George Sackville, who had lately changed his name to Germaine, and who, from the stigma under which he had laboured since the battle of Minden, and from his violent and headstrong temper, was an accession of but little advantage to the king's government.

The opposition offered a ceaseless resistance to the conduct of the ministry, and especially to the plan of hiring bodies of mercenary troops in Germany to be sent to America: but they were constantly overruled by large majorities, though lord North did at last consent to send commissioners to America to treat of a reconciliation, with authority nominally unlimited, but, in fact, with instructions binding

them so strictly to the exaction of previous submission, as an indispensable condition of pardon for the past, and of redress for the future, that their mission proved, as might have been easily foreseen, completely abortive.

The warfare languished during the winter. The Americans made an ineffectual attempt to surprise Quebec; but, with this exception, no enterprise of any importance was undertaken by either side. Washington complained greatly of the insubordination of the troops, and of the general apathy of the people; and the English government failed to send any reinforcements to their general, though he was greatly in need of them. Gage had returned to England, leaving general Howe in command, who decided on evacuating Boston, and transferring his troops by sea to the province of New York. The movement was dictated partly by political reasons, since New York, being in a less unfriendly colony than Boston, afforded a more trustworthy base for future operations. But the Americans not unnaturally exulted in the recovery of Boston as a military triumph, and struck a medal to commemorate the event. It was March when Howe left Boston, but it was June before he landed in New York, having waited at Halifax for reinforcements which were promised him from England. He had not yet been joined by all the troops which he expected, when the war assumed a new character from the declaration of independence which, after long deliberation, the congress published, and which was signed by the representatives of the different states on the 4th of July.

By the middle of August Howe felt himself strong enough to commence active operations, and prepared to attack a division of the enemy which was posted at Brooklyn to cover the city of New York. The Americans, being mostly raw troops, were defeated with ease; but Howe had not skill or energy to improve his victory, and Washington was allowed to retire in good order to New York; and, when he was at last forced to evacuate that city, Howe displayed the same want of vigour, and forbore to attack the retreating battalions, which were completely at his mercy. His elder brother, lord Howe, was the admiral of the fleet which had conveyed the reinforcements from England; he was also the chief of the commissioners who had been appointed to treat of a reconciliation, and, in spite of the failure of his first efforts, he thought that the advantages now gained by the British afforded him a fresh opening for negotiation, of which he availed himself, trusting partly to his knowledge of Franklin, with whom he had been well acquainted in England. But Franklin was now one of the bitterest enemies of the English connexion, and lord Howe's well-meant endeavours were a second time doomed to meet with disappointment.

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Franklin was soon employed on a mission more congenial to his feelings, being sent to Paris to negotiate for the support of France, from which he obtained secret supplies, though, as yet, the government was unwilling to commit itself to hostilities with England by any open declaration in favour of the Americans. The war still proceeded languidly, though at Christmas Washington made a successful attempt on the Hessian troops encamped at Trenton, on the Delaware, in which he took a great number of prisoners, following up his blow, a few days afterwards, by surprising some British regiments on their march to join lord Cornwallis, who was now commanding the troops at New York, when he again made many prisoners, and, what was of more consequence, by these two successful enterprises, diffused among his soldiers a confidence in themselves, in which they had hitherto been sadly deficient.

His countrymen did not however confine themselves wholly to honourable warfare. Silas Deane, one of the ambassadors who had been sent with Franklin to Paris, hired a man known as Jack the Painter, but whose real name was Aitken, to set fire to the dockyards and shipping in the different English harbours. Aitken did succeed in burning the rope-house at Portsmouth, but, before he could do any more mischief, he was detected and hanged.

The length of the American winter made the season available for active operations shorter than in Europe. In the spring of 1777, the Americans were encouraged by the arrival of the young marquis de la Fayette from France, whom, though wholly devoid of ability, they hailed as a harbinger of more substantial assistance. About the same time general Howe again embarked the chief part of his army on board his transports, and sailed with them to the southward, with the view of surprising Philadelphia, the capital of the important province of Pennsylvania, and the seat of the congress. Washington, as soon as he discovered his plan, determined to fight a battle for the defence of that important city, but was defeated, on the banks of a small stream called the Brandywine; and, at the end of September, the British marched into Philadelphia, where the citizens were better inclined to their cause than the inhabitants of any other part of the United States. Washington made one gallant attempt to recover the city, but was foiled, and the two armies retired into winter quarters.

But on the Canadian frontier, the campaign had been less favourable to Great Britain. The attempt made by the Americans on Quebec, had suggested to the British government the desirableness of preventing any similar aggression by advancing their own line of operations as far as the Hudson; and in the spring of 1777, a body of 7000 men, under general Burgoyne, advanced to Ticonderoga, which they occupied without resistance.

As he proceeded onwards, he found great difficulty in obtaining supplies, while the inhabitants of the colony of New Hampshire which he was invading, roused by reports of the atrocities committed by the native Indians, who formed a part of his army, took up arms with great eagerness, soon raised a force which doubled his in numbers, and began to assume the offensive with great vigour; cutting off a division of Germans who had been detached to procure supplies, intercepting his despatches, harassing his flanks, and threatening his outlying divisions, so that he was forced to unite them to the main body. Still he pressed on, hoping to establish himself at Albany, and crossed the Hudson with his whole force, to attack the enemy, who, under the command of general Gates, occupied a strong position on Behmus's Heights. He drove them from their ground, but gained no advantage beyond the barren honours of the victory, as they still occupied their fortified lines in the rear of the field of battle; and Burgoyne, not feeling himself strong enough for a second attack without further assistance, remained for some time inactive, in the hope that sir Henry Clinton's operations in Gates's rear would effect a diversion in his favour. But he was disappointed; and being forced at last to venture on a second battle on the same ground, he was defeated with severe loss, and compelled to retreat towards Saratoga. When he reached that village, he found himself entirely surrounded; all the fords and passes commanded by the enemy, his supplies exhausted, and his communications and all means of obtaining fresh stores wholly cut off.

After revolving every expedient in his mind, at last, with the unanimous consent of his chief officers, he entered into a negotiation with Gates, which resulted in the conclusion of a convention, by virtue of which the British troops were to surrender their arms, and to be allowed to return to England, on condition of not serving against America during the continuance of the war. But the terms of the convention were shamefully violated by the Americans, who, though they allowed a few of the officers their liberty on their parole, detained the soldiers, 3000 in number, as prisoners of war.

The news of this disaster produced a great effect in Europe; it determined the French court to acknowledge the independence of the United States; in England, it stirred up the people in general to make great efforts for the more vigorous prosecution of the war, and private subscriptions were entered into for the purpose of raising new regiments; but at the same time it only showed the statesmen of the kingdom more completely than ever the hopelessness of carrying on such a contest with success; and animated the opposition to renew their attacks with more vigour than ever on the ministry for having caused this disaster by their own supineness

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and mismanagement. Chatham assailed them in the lords, and in the commons they had not only to encounter Burke, but Fox also, who in spite of the unparalleled irregularity of his private life, had been rapidly rising in importance, and though not yet thirty years of age, by his skill as a debater, and by the close logic and manly argument of his speeches, had obtained the ear of the house more completely than Burke, whose tact as a public speaker was inferior to his other powers, and who, though often soaring to a pitch of eloquence which Fox could never reach, yet as often perplexed his hearers by a wisdom too deep and far-seeing for their appreciation, and by refinement too subtle for their comprehension, or wearied their attention by the didactic iteration with which he exhausted his subject.

The ministers, however, gained a little strength by a division which now took place in the counsels of the opposition; as the Rockingham party considered it hopeless to struggle against the independence of America, which lord Chatham would never consent to acknowledge, a refusal somewhat inconsistent with his speeches in former years, when he had pronounced it impossible to conquer her even single-handed, while it was now certain that in a few weeks she would have the open assistance of France. The views, however, which he thus expressed made an union of the ministers with him appear more practicable than one with lord Rockingham; and after carrying through both houses bills repealing the duty on tea, renouncing all idea of ever taxing America in future, and authorizing the king to appoint commissioners to treat with the American colonies, on the ground of admitting all their claims except that of independence, lord North, finding himself unable to prevail on the king to accept his absolute resignation of office, began to negotiate with lord Chatham, in the hope of effecting a coalition with him, but found that Chatham would be satisfied with nothing less than an entire change of the ministry, to which the king, with high expressions of resentment against him, positively refused to agree, declaring that he would rather abandon his crown than submit to place himself at the mercy of the opposition. Sorely against his will lord North consented still to carry on the ministry, and prepared for war with France as well as with America; for France had now communicated her alliance with the United States in terms so violent, that we instantly recalled our ambassador from Paris; and though no declaration of war had as yet taken place, both countries were making open preparations for it as inevitable.

Finding, therefore, that there was no longer any hope of a change of measures, the Rockingham party determined to make an effort for the termination of the war; and on the 17th of April, the duke

of Richmond moved an address to the king, entreating him to withdraw his troops from America, and to make peace with the colonies on their own terms. He did not expect to succeed; but his motion had an effect which he had not anticipated. Chatham, who looked on the acknowledgment of the independence of America as a dismemberment of the empire, which could only lead to her falling from her high place among the nations, resolved, though suffering from gout, to oppose the motion in parliament, and, in spite of the advice of his physicians, and the entreaties of his friends, came down to the house of lords to raise his own voice against it. The effort was too great for him; his voice was scarcely audible, his sentences mostly unconnected and perplexed. Once or twice flashes of his former eloquence reminded his hearers of what it had been; but in general, his speech served to show the prostration of his faculties as clearly as his unabated courage and resolution. He sat down, and presently afterwards, rising to make some further observations on the duke of Richmond's reply, he fell to the ground in an apoplectic fit, from which he never recovered. He was removed to his house at Hayes, in Kent, where on the 11th of May he died, in the seventieth year of his age. The parliament unanimously voted him a public funeral in Westminster Abbey, and an annuity of 4000*l.* a year was settled for ever on the heirs of his earldom.

Thus died one who is so commonly known by the title of the great lord Chatham, that the mention of him as such may seem to render any further attempt to speak of his character as superfluous; yet it cannot be denied that he was guilty of great faults; that his conduct in opposition was frequently, one may almost say generally, factious and turbulent; and that even his first glorious administration was rather dazzling than really beneficial to the kingdom. He did not scruple to avow himself a lover of honourable war, and a fondness of war is certainly a passion to be condemned and deplored in any one entrusted with the government of a powerful nation. On the other hand, it is equally certain that in the short space of four years he raised the spirit of the country at home, and its reputation abroad, and strengthened the reigning family on the throne by uniting all classes, even those which had been previously the most disaffected, in its service. These were great deeds, owing nothing to accident, but being rather the fruit of a mind original in its designs, fertile in its resources, energetic and undaunted in the prosecution of its projects; while his eloquence, though neither illustrated by the varied learning and exuberant fancy of Burke, nor by the close reasoning and irresistible logic of Fox, and of his own son, was admirably adapted to his favourite objects of rousing the resolution of the people to the subjugation of their enemies, or

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to the assertion and maintenance of their own liberties, of which he was at all times, and against all foes, the most intrepid and unwearied champion.

But it is not to his eloquence, nor to his courage, nor even to his love of liberty, that he owes the confirmation of his title, the great, by posterity, so much as to his honest, disinterested patriotism. We may allow that he placed an exaggerated value on his services, but we must also admit that it was a firm belief in the value of those services, and an ardent wish to perform such to his country, that was the mainspring of all his actions. "My lord," he once said to the duke of Devonshire, "I believe that I can save this country, and I believe that no one else can;" and his country, which sooner or later, estimates at its proper value the conduct of those who, professing to live for her, do, in truth, live only for themselves, can afford to look with liberal indulgence at the errors and weaknesses of her real patriots, which she pardons to their common humanity, holding up as an example to their successors, not so much the deeds which they achieved, as the objects that they proposed to themselves, and the honest virtue with which they pursued them for her benefit and for her glory.

In May the commissioners appointed in accordance with the bill brought in by lord North, arrived in America; but the congress refused to treat with them at all, unless they previously acknowledged the independence of the States, which was the only condition to which they had no authority to consent. The year passed off without any operations of importance in America except the retirement of the British troops from Philadelphia to New York, and the consequent return of the congress to the former city. War had been declared between France and England, and a strong fleet had been sent by the French to the American coast; but D'Estaing, its commander, baffled the attempts of lord Howe to bring him to battle; and his conduct rather alienated the Americans from the French, a feeling which was aggravated by a jealousy of their real objects, when D'Estaing issued a proclamation, inviting the Canadians to throw off the English yoke, and to return to their former masters. In spite of his presence, several of the French West Indian islands were taken by our fleet; and a detachment, sent by sea to the southern states, took Savannah, the capital of Georgia, and induced many of the inhabitants to take up arms in the king's cause.

In Europe there was a greater prospect of a decisive action between the hostile fleets; as Keppel, the commander of the Channel squadron, engaged D'Orvilliers, the French admiral, off Ushant. The battle was terminated by the darkness; and the next day, when Keppel wished to renew it, his orders were disobeyed by sir Hugh

Palliser, his second in command, who afterwards brought an accusation against Keppel of misconduct in the action, which formed the grounds for an enquiry by a court-martial. The whole affair would hardly have been worthy of notice had it not been for the ill-advised conduct of both parties, who made the trial an occasion for a political demonstration. Keppel belonged to the opposition; Palliser was a lord of the admiralty; and the leaders of the opposition went down to Portsmouth, appearing every day in court as Keppel's friends, and showing the greatest interest in his cause; and the greatest delight at his honourable acquittal, at which the ministerial party were so annoyed that, at the general election which took place shortly afterwards, the king himself condescended to canvass the tradesmen of Windsor against Keppel, who was a candidate for the representation of that borough, and locked the duke of Sussex up in the nursery as a punishment for providing himself with a cockade of the Keppel colours.

In the spring of the next year Spain, always under the influence of France, after professing a desire to mediate between that country and England, on the failure of her proposals, recalled her ambassador from London, and declared war against us; and, her fleet uniting with the French, D'Orvilliers paraded up the Channel with sixty-six ships, to which our admiralty could oppose but half that number. No battle, however, took place; in fact, the Spanish ships were too foul to be able long to keep the sea, and, after a vain display, the allied fleets returned to their own ports. Our coasts were exposed to more real danger from a small squadron, commanded by Paul Jones, a Scotchman, in the American service, who took some ships off the coast of Yorkshire, and, sailing on to the Frith of Forth, threatened to attack Edinburgh. The citizens began to prepare with great spirit for a vigorous defence, but were saved from the necessity of displaying their valour by a storm, which drove the squadron off the coast.

Meanwhile the war was producing great discontent both in England and in America. In America the congress had proved unable adequately to organize a system for the provision of the necessary supplies for the troops, which consequently deserted in great numbers; while the paper money which they issued was so depreciated in value, that the States seemed on the verge of bankruptcy. At the same time, in England, the feelings of dissatisfaction were leading the people to listen to all kinds of projects for parliamentary reform, very extreme views on which subject were entertained and advocated in the house of lords by the duke of Richmond and lord Shelburne, who, since the death of lord Chatham, had been regarded as the head of his party. Many constituencies were eager to call on their representatives to pledge themselves in favour of

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such violent measures as annual parliaments and universal suffrage ; while lord Rockingham, with more practical wisdom, pointed out that the first evil to be checked was the corruption of men when chosen into parliament, and that the true remedy was to be found in the diminution of the influence of the crown over members of both houses. This remedy his party, though in opposition, endeavoured to supply by a bill, wisely entrusted to Burke, who brought it forward in a speech which excited the admiration, and extorted the applause even of those most unwilling to adopt the reforms which it proposed. For the present, though it gave a death-blow at once to some of the most preposterous abuses, it was defeated as a whole measure, but was brought forward again in a somewhat modified form with better success, when the mover and his friends were in office.

But the discontent assumed a more formidable shape the next year, when it was inflamed by the bitterest of all feelings, sectarian animosity. In 1778 the parliament had passed a bill, brought in by sir George Saville, to relieve the Roman Catholics from some of the most vexatious and flagrantly unjust of the disabilities to which they were subject ; and some of the more violent Protestants had raised an outcry against it, which had given rise to dangerous disturbances in several towns, particularly in Scotland, where they found a leader of high rank, though possessed of neither talents nor principles, in lord George Gordon, a younger son of the duke of that name. From Scotland the flame spread to England ; a Protestant association was formed in London, which lord George instigated to concoct an enormous petition to the house of commons ; and, when it had been signed by above 100,000 persons, he desired them to meet him in St. George's Fields, and to carry it in procession to the house, to which he undertook to present it. The mob that assembled was computed at upwards of 50,000 men ; and, though its meeting was known long beforehand, the government took no steps whatever to protect the city or the citizens from the injury that might be expected from an excited and disorderly rabble. No one, however, could possibly have anticipated the excesses into which they broke out. They insulted all the peers and members of parliament whom they thought unfavourable to their views ; the most especial object of their anger was lord Mansfield, because, as chief justice, he had lately presided at a trial where a Roman Catholic priest had been acquitted. For some days they besieged the approaches to the two houses, filling even the lobbies of the house of commons, so that it became necessary to employ soldiers to remove them ; and when, on the 7th of June, the commons adjourned without having taken the petition into consideration, the mob, which lord George had been continually inflaming with violent

speeches, began to commit the most fearful outrages. They attacked the residences of the ministers, which were with difficulty protected by the troops; repulsed from Downing Street, they proceeded to Newgate, burnt that strong prison and released the prisoners, destroyed the other metropolitan gaols, and the houses of several of the most active and, therefore, obnoxious magistrates; and, flushed with their victory, they hastened to inflict the same treatment on the house of lord Mansfield, in Bloomsbury Square; the chief justice himself and lady Mansfield, having scarcely time to escape at the back of the house. With frantic yells the rabble forced the front door, piled up the books, composing one of the finest libraries in the kingdom, in the parlour, as the fuel most easily to be obtained, and then set the whole on fire. For two days London bore the appearance of a town taken by storm and in the possession of ferocious enemies; rapine and conflagration were raging unchecked, the magistrates were terrified, the military officers doubted their power to act till an hour after the riot act had been read (a respite which always gave the guilty time to escape), when the firmness of the king himself put a stop to ravages which, had it not been for his timely vigour, seemed likely to continue unchecked till they had destroyed half the capital. He summoned a privy council, and, expressing his own belief that the delay, imagined to be required by the law, was wholly unnecessary, appealed to Wedderburne, the attorney-general, for his opinion. Wedderburne, with prompt fearlessness, asserted the duty of the soldiers to proceed against a mob engaged in such riots the moment that the riot act was read, or even before it was read. The king issued instant orders to act on his exposition of the law; the soldiers, released from their dread of being themselves prosecuted for violation of the law, easily dispersed the rioters, though not without considerable bloodshed, and London was saved. Numbers of the most violent of the rioters were tried and executed, though lord George himself, being prosecuted for high treason, instead of for sedition, was acquitted.

On the coast of Spain admiral Rodney gave the Spanish fleet a severe defeat, and relieved Gibraltar, which had been closely blockaded ever since the commencement of the war with Spain; but in America little of importance took place, except a victory gained by lord Cornwallis at Camden, and the desertion to the British army of general Arnold, which, unfortunately, became the cause of the death of major André, a gallant officer, and the English adjutant-general, who, crossing the American outposts in disguise, in order to arrange measures with Arnold, was taken prisoner, and put to death as a spy by Washington, who refused to recognize a pass with which André had been furnished by Arnold, being

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influenced, apparently, more by vexation at the treachery of the general, who alone, of the American officers, had given evidence of any high military qualities, than by a strict regard to the laws of military service.

But in the year 1781 events began to crowd upon one another with a rapidity which betokened a speedier conclusion. Colonel Tarleton, with a strong detachment from lord Cornwallis's army, was defeated with considerable loss at a place called the Cowpens; a blow which Cornwallis more than counterbalanced by routing general Greene, who had nearly double his numbers, at Guildford, and who was beaten again by lord Rawdon, at Hobkirk's Hill, close to the battle-field of Camden in the preceding year. The most hardly-contested action of all was fought at Eutaw Springs, in South Carolina, in September, without any decisive result, though, in some respects, the Americans reaped the fruits of it, as the English were shortly afterwards obliged to retreat to Charleston, and the open country, both in South Carolina and Georgia, was restored to its allegiance to the congress.

In Virginia matters were proceeding still more unfavourably for the British, where lord Cornwallis and sir Henry Clinton were beginning to entertain feelings of jealousy and ill-will towards each other; and our difficulties were increased by the arrival of the count de Grasse in the Chesapeake, with a fleet far superior to any British squadron in those seas. Encouraged by his arrival, partly also prompted by the necessity of performing some decisive exploit which might rouse his countrymen from the apathy with which they in general seemed to regard the contest, Washington began to act more vigorously against lord Cornwallis, who, with 7000 men, was posted at a small village called Yorktown, situated on a narrow neck of land between the two estuaries which form the mouths of the rivers York and James. In the latter end of September, Washington, with nearly 18,000 men, and a powerful battery of heavy artillery, proceeded to invest the place, and lord Cornwallis, pronouncing it incapable of being long defended, sent urgent demands to Clinton for reinforcements. They were promised with all speed, and Cornwallis laboured vigorously to strengthen his defences so as to enable him to hold out till they arrived. But the American artillery, aided by guns brought up from the French fleet, was so superior to his, that it silenced his batteries, made large breaches in the walls, and burnt some of the English transports. In vain the British made a gallant sally, stormed the battery which did them the most harm, and spiked the guns; the reinforcements did not arrive, and Cornwallis determined to endeavour to retire to Gloucester, on the opposite side of the river York. He had prepared boats to cross the river, when

a violent storm forced him to abandon that plan; the enemy's fire became more fierce and insupportable than ever, and at last he was compelled to propose a capitulation. Washington, however, would be satisfied with no terms short of an absolute surrender; to which Cornwallis at last agreed, and on the 9th of October he and his troops laid down their arms.

The news was received in England by the end of November, and all parties felt that the events thus announced had, in fact, terminated the war: the king alone was eager to continue it; and, when parliament met a day or two afterwards, mentioned the disaster in his speech as a circumstance that called on the people for vigorous, animated, and united exertions. The opposition, however, felt themselves so strengthened in the views which they had long propounded of the impossibility of carrying on the war with success, that they moved amendments to the address in both houses; in both they were defeated by large majorities, though they were powerfully assisted by a new ally, William Pitt, the second son of the late lord Chatham, who had lately been returned to parliament as member for Appleby; and who, though only twenty-two, displayed an eloquence different from, but not inferior, to that of his father, and a precocity of genius beyond all example. One or two motions to discontinue the war were defeated, but in February one made by Conway was carried by a majority of nineteen, while two motions expressly condemnatory of the ministers, and asserting their want of the confidence of parliament, were only lost by a few votes; and at last the king consented to accept lord North's resignation, though so reluctantly did he submit to the necessity, that, declaring that his sentiments of honour would not permit him to send for any of the leaders of the opposition and personally "treat with them," he employed lord Thurlow, the chancellor, to negotiate with lord Rockingham. Once he broke off the negotiation by refusing to consent to Burke's bill for economical reform being made a ministerial measure, though he had known beforehand that lord Rockingham would insist upon it as indispensable; at another time he actually contemplated abdicating the kingdom in preference to changing the ministry; secret orders were given to prepare the royal yacht for his departure to Hanover; and, with a strange diversion of his thoughts, which seems to indicate that his mind was at this time affected in some degree by the agitation to which it had been exposed, he even began to occupy himself in planning liveries and state dresses for his new court.

Perhaps the idea of such a violent alternative contributed to incline him to more sober counsels; for, at last, on the 20th of March, he authorized lord North to announce to the house of commons that his ministry was at end; though his dislike to lord

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Rockingham, as the former repealer of the stamp act, was still so firmly rooted, that he tried to persuade lord Shelburne or lord Gower to undertake the formation of a new cabinet. Both these noblemen, however, declared that lord Rockingham alone could form a strong administration; and the king was forced to yield, though even now he would not see lord Rockingham, but conducted the negotiation with him through lord Shelburne, who, in full accordance with his long-established character for double dealing, gladly undertook a part which promised him an opportunity of creating a divided interest in the cabinet. The ministry was speedily formed; lord Rockingham became first lord of the treasury, Shelburne and Fox were the secretaries of state; Pitt was offered a subordinate office, but refused it, as he had previously declared that he never would accept a place of minor importance; a subordinate office, too, to the astonishment of every one, was all that could be found for Burke, who was made paymaster of the forces, without a seat in the cabinet. It is impossible to say what was the reason of this exclusion of one who, during the long period that his party had been in opposition, had, of all men, done it and his country the greatest service; but it was most ungrateful and impolitic, and also most inconsistent, since one of the chief measures of the new ministry was to be the bill for economical reform which he had framed, and which he was to conduct. More impolitic and more mischievous still was the retention of lord Thurlow as chancellor; a turbulent, intriguing, selfish politician, but who, in spite of a bad private character, and even of an utter disregard for all appearance of decorum, had established himself in the royal favour, by constant professions of inviolable personal adherence to the king, and by violent abuse of the Americans. Thurlow was known to be opposed to the most important measures which his colleagues were about to bring forward, but it was said that the king insisted on his retaining the seals as the sole condition on which he would permit Fox to have a seat in the cabinet. Rockingham, however, had certainly power to overrule his majesty's wish on this point; and, as it was known that Thurlow would oppose the acknowledgment of American independence, it seems to have been his duty as well as his obvious interest, for the sake of his own comfort, to have done so. His forbearance to do so is the more remarkable, because his first ministry, as has been related, had been overthrown by the intrigues of another chancellor, kept in office, like Thurlow, to please the king.

The new ministry began without delay to apply themselves to the great objects which they had so long advocated; and to one, which though not previously urged by them, pressed itself on their notice at the first moment of their entering office. Ireland had

hitherto been treated too much like a conquered country, (indeed, it is only of late years that that reproach has been entirely wiped away from English statesmen,) and the events in America had not rendered her more inclined to acquiesce in her condition. She had substantial grievances to complain of; not only had old acts of Henry VII., taking away from her parliament all power of independent legislation, been enforced by fresh enactments passed in the reign of George I., but an embargo had been laid upon her trade, which, without any such restraint, would have suffered sufficiently from the war with her best customers, the Americans. What was worst of all, when the country was agitated by apprehensions of a French invasion, it was found that the war had so drained the island of troops, that it was quite defenceless. Without waiting for orders, the Irish began, in pure loyalty to the crown, to take up arms. The inhabitants of Ulster took the lead; but the enthusiasm, once kindled, spread through all the provinces, till the volunteers amounted to 50,000 men. This force, however, was only meant as a terror to foreign enemies; from England they sought redress only by peaceful and lawful means, petitioning the English parliament, when lord North first proposed to conciliate the colonies by measures of relief to their trade, that they, citizens of the sister kingdom, might not be placed in a worse condition than the Americans; and lord North, strong in the support of the Rockingham party on this question, would have conceded all their demands, if he had not been daunted by the illiberal objections of some of the principal trading and manufacturing towns of England. His submission to their outcry produced great discontent in Ireland, where there arose, just when she most needed him, almost the only real patriot, as far as devotion to her interests is concerned, that she has ever produced.

Henry Grattan was singularly fitted to be her guide in such a cause; with the purest disinterestedness he combined sagacity to perceive the proper object of her efforts, a singleness of purpose which could not be diverted from it, a courage which could not be driven from it, and eloquence of the most impassioned and varied character to encourage her champions, or to gain over her adversaries. His wise principles of religious toleration engaged the Roman Catholics in his support; and thus, as the leader of an united people, he pressed their claims with irresistible power on the government. His demands may be comprised under two heads: freedom of trade, and equality in legislation; and he was preparing to submit a motion framed in accordance with these objects to the Irish house of commons, when lord North's administration fell. He only waited till the new ministry was declared, and then carried an unanimous address from the Irish house of commons to the

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crown, urging that no body but the Irish parliament could have a right to make laws for Ireland ; and the ministers, wisely feeling that unwilling subjects are little better than enemies, resolved on frankly conceding all that was asked of them, and at once passed a bill for the repeal of the obnoxious act of George I. This one measure, by leaving the Irish to enact laws for themselves, removed all their discontent, and diffused joy and confidence in the justice of England throughout the whole island. If England was to become weaker by the loss of her American colonies, that bill, by securing her the affection of Ireland, more than made amends for the loss.

The promised reform in England proceeded with equal rapidity. Bills incapacitating government contractors from becoming members of parliament, and revenue officers from voting at elections, were carried in spite of the opposition of the chancellor, and the importance of the latter of the two may be estimated by the fact that the number of persons disfranchised by it amounted to 12,000, and that they had the preponderating influence in no less than seventy boroughs. Still more important was Burke's great bill for economical reform, which was introduced by a message from the crown. It was hardly as large a measure as that which he had introduced two years before, probably because it was found impossible to obtain the king's consent to subject the duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall to its operation ; but it was sufficiently extensive to save 70,000*l.* a year to the nation, and to show the disinterestedness of the ministers, who surrendered a vast amount of valuable patronage.

But the greatest question of all was how to terminate the American war ; and on this serious differences arose in the cabinet, owing mainly to the excessive jealousy which Fox at all times entertained of Shelburne, who gave his colleagues some reason to complain of his want of candour to them, by concealing from them some important propositions which he had received from Franklin. That the subjection of America to England could be preserved, was an idea entertained by no member of the cabinet ; but it was debated earnestly whether her independence should be at once acknowledged, or whether the recognition of it should be kept back, and made a condition in the treaty to be proposed, and, as such, a handle for obtaining favourable terms on other points. It was wisely decided to do with a good grace what must inevitably be done. In the course of May the independence of America was formally acknowledged ; and immediately afterwards a bill was brought in and rapidly carried, authorizing the conclusion of a peace with the United States of America. This peace lord Rockingham was not to have the honour of concluding. His health had long been deli-

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cate, and at last it was discovered that he was afflicted with water on the chest. Towards the end of June he was further attacked with influenza, then a new disease in the fashionable world; and on the 1st of July he died, having in his two short administrations performed more signal services to his country than it often falls to a minister to render it in a long official career.

The king at once appointed lord Shelburne to succeed to the treasury, but Fox and Burke, with others of lord Rockingham's adherents, refused to serve under him, and resigned their offices. The most important change, however, was in the chancellorship of the exchequer, where lord John Cavendish was replaced by Mr. Pitt, who thus became a cabinet minister at three-and-twenty.

The new ministry continued the negotiations for peace, which were facilitated by the great achievements of our navy. Admiral Rodney's defeat of a Spanish fleet in 1780 has already been mentioned; and since that time he had been stationed in the West Indies, where the chief exertions of the French commanders had been directed to the avoidance of a battle with him. For a time they succeeded, for the party spirit which had for some years infected the British navy was not confined to Keppel's fleet. On one occasion, in 1781, it broke out in such open disobedience to Rodney's orders as prevented him from bringing admiral de Guichen to action, after his own superiority in nautical skill had placed the Frenchman in his power; and it was only by a happy combination of conciliation and firmness that he was able to eradicate a feeling so dishonouring to officers in the presence of an enemy. But his patience and resolution were rewarded; to use his own expression, he "taught his captains to be what they had never been before, officers." And his reward was more brilliant than ever he had ventured to hope for. At the beginning of 1782 the force under his command was a splendid fleet of 86 ships, with crews on which at last he could thoroughly rely; the French fleet, under the count de Grasse was probably the stronger of the two, since, though the ships numbered only 84, they were, on an average, larger and more heavily armed than the British vessels. The French flagship, the *Ville de Paris*, was looked upon by themselves as the finest ship in the world; nevertheless, de Grasse did his best to avoid a battle, and, after the two fleets came in sight of one another on the 10th of April, it cost Rodney two days of manœuvres to gain the wind of his antagonist, and with it the power of compelling him to fight; when this had been accomplished, neither side doubted the result. Still de Grasse, thus brought to bay, for a long time fought gallantly, protracting the struggle throughout the greater part of the day; and it was not till the sun was nearly sinking that he himself

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surrendered, and the greatest victory as yet gained by a British fleet was crowned by the capture of the commander-in-chief. A blow of equal heaviness was in store for both French and Spaniards at Gibraltar. A combined armament of immense strength had been now for nearly three years pressing the siege of that fortress, which general Elliot had been defending not only with dauntless resolution, but with the most unbounded fertility and originality of resource. So confident were the besiegers of taking it, that some of the French princes of the blood came from Paris, hoping to share in the final triumph, but as it proved, only to witness the entire discomfiture of the vast efforts fruitlessly made by both countries. One of the most skilful of the French engineers contrived a number of huge floating batteries, which he asserted would prove impregnable and unassailable; but when they were brought into action, the ceaseless fire of red-hot shot, which Elliot directed against them, set them in a blaze; and though the combined fleets still remained in the straits, keeping up the semblance of a blockade which they were unable to enforce in effect, their whole hope of success was destroyed by the middle of September.

At first the negotiations, which were carried on at Paris, where Franklin was the American ambassador, proceeded slowly, the courts of France and Spain not being really desirous to terminate the war; but, after a time, the Americans becoming jealous of the French, consented to treat separately, and signed a provisional treaty. The knowledge of that fact rendered the French and Spaniards more accommodating; and in January, 1783, peace between all the belligerent powers was finally concluded: the independence of America being acknowledged, and the Americans being admitted to a participation in the fur trade and Newfoundland fisheries. Some of our conquests among the West Indian islands and in India were restored to the French, who also gave back some of the islands which they had taken from us; Minorca and the Floridas were ceded to Spain, in exchange for Providence, the Bahama isles, and some commercial rights which had been frequent objects of negotiation between the two countries.

Thus ended the American war; caused by childish impolicy and conducted with great imbecility by the ministers, and with great want of skill by the commanders; but terminated on conditions that might well have been the foundation of friendship and alliance between two nations of the same blood and the same language; and still intimately connected by many ties which a war of a few years could not sever. At George III.'s first reception of the ambassador of the new republic, both parties expressed their senti-

ments with dignity and proper feeling. The ambassador professed that he should esteem himself the happiest of men, if he could be instrumental in recommending his country more and more to the royal benevolence; and the king declared that, though he had been the last man in his kingdom to consent to the separation of America from England, yet, now that that separation was made, he would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent power.

But the sentiments thus worthily expressed were for some time not acted up to: mutual jealousies and suspicions sprung up, which more than once brought the two people to the verge of war, and once, as will be related hereafter, actually involved them in it; and at subsequent periods, indications of the same unfriendly feelings have been but too apparent, though the temperate wisdom of the real statesmen of both nations has prevented any collision; but in the last year,* an event has taken place which may be looked upon as the harbinger of more kindly relations between the two nations: An English ship called the *Resolute*, one of those which had quitted our shores for the Arctic Seas, on a voyage of discovery, was found by some American vessels, deserted by her crew, wandering amid the half-frozen waters of the Northern Atlantic. The American government, which had already shown a brotherly interest in the fate of Franklin and his unfortunate comrades, repaired and refitted her, and with graceful liberality sent her to England, as a present to the English nation. She was received as such a people ought to receive such a present; with one universal acclamation of grateful acknowledgment, not of the value of the gift, but of the noble and friendly sympathy which had prompted it. The queen paid a visit to the officers appointed to bring her over, on board the restored ship; but a stronger evidence of the national feeling was to be found in the unanimity with which the *Resolute*, as refitted by the Americans, was made a principal feature in the Christmas pantomimes at every theatre in London, and at the cordial shouts with which her appearance was nightly hailed by the assembled multitudes.

* This was written in 1859.

CHAPTER LXII.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).



HE conditions of the peace were no sooner communicated to parliament, than they were vehemently attacked by both parties of the opposition. Fox was eager to justify the objection to lord Shelburne, which he had made the ground of his resignation of office, and which was generally, even by his own friends, considered an insufficient motive; and lord North was naturally inclined to avail himself of any plausible opportunity of retaliating on those who had so fiercely opposed himself while minister. The most assailable points of the treaties appear to have been the concessions made to France in India, by the restoration of Pondicherry and Chandernagore; yet this was the point of all others to which least objection was made; a striking proof how little Indian politics as yet attracted the attention of the generality of statesmen. They were defended, especially by Pitt, mainly on the general ground that our finances and resources of all kinds had been so much exhausted by the long war against so formidable a combination of enemies, that, as was not strange, peace was more necessary for us than for them. The fact may be doubted; it was true that the war had added above a hundred millions to our national debt, but it was believed to have cost our enemies still more, while they were certainly less able than ourselves to bear such an additional burden; but, true or not, it was felt to be an ignoble argument, and failed to convince the house of commons, who condemned the ministers by two successive divisions: though in the house of lords they had a majority of thirteen in their favour.

Lord Shelburne resigned; and again the king was greatly perplexed. Lord North had lost much of his former favour in his eyes by his union with Mr. Fox, the object of the king's especial dislike, on the subject of the peace, and the government was offered to Mr. Pitt, who showed a prudence rare in so young a man by declining the offer. Lord North was then invited to return to the treasury, but the arrangements into which he had entered with Fox prevented his acquiescence in this plan. One expedient after another was proposed in vain; Pitt was again more than once appealed to for his aid, but saw too clearly the certainty of failure to

be induced to make the attempt to form a ministry. After many weeks of uncertainty had passed, the commons presented an address to the king, begging him to form a strong administration, and at last, six weeks after lord Shelburne's resignation, the celebrated coalition ministry was formed, North and Fox being the two secretaries of state, and the duke of Portland, a man of no particular abilities or reputation, being first lord of the treasury.

A coalition such as this, between men who had been so violently opposed as North and Fox, was very unpopular, not only with the country in general, but with most sober thinkers, who argued that a morbid and corrupt appetite for place must have been the chief incentive to it. Fox himself was aware of the questionable character of such a step, and said that it was one which success alone could justify; and with success it was not crowned. It is on him that the chief part of the blame has fallen. Lord North, though advocating a line of conduct to which Fox objected, had said nothing of him personally which went beyond the bounds of fair argument; but Fox, not content with opposing lord North's policy, had made the most bitter attacks on his personal honour; had declared that his crimes were such as could only be expiated with his blood; that he should fear to trust himself in the same room with him, and that if he ever acted in concert with him he would be content to be held eternally infamous. His conduct now was evidently a complete retraction of all these assertions, which lord North could hardly be blamed for accepting; but the people in general considered that if these denunciations had not originally been dishonestly made, it was plain that they now had been dishonestly abandoned.

The session which ensued was remarkable chiefly for a motion for parliamentary reform, brought forward by Pitt, proposing the disfranchisement of every borough which should hereafter be proved to be corrupt, and a large addition to the number of the existing members for the different counties and for London. The proposed bill excited no attention in the country, was resisted by lord North, and defeated by a great majority. In spite, however, of this appearance of strength, the ministry was fated to be as shortlived as the preceding one. But, before relating the circumstances which led to its fall, we must return to the affairs of India, and to the events which had taken place in that country since the conclusion of the war at the beginning of the present reign.

After Clive's return from Bengal, the government of that country fell into great disorder; the conduct of the British officials in general was characterized by every kind of rapacity and aggression, and that of the governor, Mr. Vansittart, by vacillation and weakness. Such conduct excited the hostility and removed the

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fears of the native princes, ever fickle and restless; till, in 1763, Meer Cossim, whom, after deposing Meer Jaffier, we had lately made nabob of Bengal, thought himself able wholly to throw off his subjection to the company, and signalized his emancipation by a massacre of the principal English at Patna. He was instantly expelled by the troops, which were moved from Calcutta to the scene of blood, and Meer Jaffier was restored. The nabob of Oude took up arms to restore Meer Cossim, and marched 50,000 men to Buxar, a town on the Ganges, a little above Patna, only to receive a decisive defeat from major Munro, who, the next year overran his whole country and took some of his chief cities.

The constant advance of British victory was not, however, so hard for the natives to bear as the ceaseless severity of British oppression and extortion. Too many of the civil servants of the company looked upon India merely as a field for enriching themselves with a celerity impracticable in Europe, and the complaints of their rapacity and cruelty reached the ears of the directors at home, who were the more ready to listen to them because the affairs of the company did not thrive as the affairs of the individuals complained of; in fact, while its servants were amassing enormous wealth, the company itself was on the verge of bankruptcy. It was evident that a reform was needed, and Clive was the only man connected with the company possessed of genius and authority sufficient to devise and to enforce the necessary measures. He accepted the office of governor-general and commander-in-chief, and, in 1765, arrived in India with almost unlimited powers.

Brilliant as had been his achievements in war, his genius now shone, if possibly, more brightly still in the civil administration. He only remained in India a year and a half; but in that short time he re-established order and content throughout his whole government. His plans were vehemently resisted by many of the officers of the civil service, whose exorbitant gains were to be terminated by them. He dismissed the most guilty or the most refractory, and the rest, awed by his resolution, yielded. The army, especially the officers, prepared to rise in open mutiny rather than submit to the retrenchments which he directed, and were headed by sir Robert Fletcher, the second in command to Clive himself. Clive repaired in person to the camp; the native troops stood by him to a man. He cashiered Fletcher and others of the ringleaders, pardoned the rest, and restored obedience and discipline in the army; at the same time, by his arrangements with the native princes, he obtained for the company the entire sovereignty over Bengal and the adjacent provinces, burdened only with the payment of an annual revenue to the rulers, who abdicated all but

their titles of dignity, and a nominal sovereignty, which they were no longer permitted to exercise.

For these great services he was but ill requited. His uncompromising spirit of reform had provoked the secret enmity of many who did not dare openly to raise a voice against him. After his departure from India his regulations were but weakly enforced by his successors; fresh acts of injustice by the officials of the company produced fresh complaints. A terrible famine, the like of which had never been heard of in the history of the world, carrying off, as it was computed to have done, one-third of the inhabitants of Bengal, had excited a fearful outcry, which some of Clive's enemies sought to turn to their own purposes, alleging the calamity to have been aggravated by his commercial regulations. Lord North, then at the head of the ministry, appointed a committee to enquire into the whole state of the company's affairs, who summoned Clive before them, and examined all his transactions with a severity which he felt, and loudly complained of, as an insult. The commons, as a body, were more just to him, and passed a vote that he had rendered great and meritorious services to his country; but the treatment which he had received sank deep into his mind. From his youth he had been subject to fits of melancholy, which, at the commencement of his career, had twice led him to meditate self-destruction; they now returned, prompting him to similar attempts, and, in November, 1774, this consummate general and statesman died by his own hand.

His mantle fell upon a worthy successor. The year before his death lord North had new-modelled the whole system of Indian government, had given the governor of Bengal authority over the other presidencies, and, in consequence, Warren Hastings, whose appointment by Clive as resident at Moorshedabad has been mentioned in a former chapter, and who was now governor of Bengal, became governor-general of India. He entered upon his office at a critical time. He found the finances of the company in great disorder, partly from the terrible famine already mentioned, and partly from a war in which the presidency of Madras had been involved with Hyder Ali, the rajah of Mysore, who, though defeated in more than one battle, displayed a much more resolute character and a far higher degree of military talent, than had been witnessed in any other native prince. By the rapidity of his marches he had, on more than one occasion, gained considerable advantages over some of the British detachments, and had laid waste, almost without resistance, the territories of our ally, the nabob of Arcot. Peace had been made with him before Hastings received his appointment; but the effects of the war survived in the debt with which it had encumbered the company, and the

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consequent diminution of their dividends. Hastings at once applied himself to the twofold and apparently incompatible task of relieving the distress of the native subjects of the company, and, at the same time, raising the revenues of the proprietors; and he completely succeeded in both objects, though some of the means to which he had recourse show a mind not trammelled by too rigid scruples of equity, and, at a later period, brought upon him that impeachment which is one of the most remarkable events connected with the history of our Indian empire. At the same time he placed the relations of the company, with the native rulers of their territories, on a more intelligible and satisfactory footing. Hitherto, though the company did in fact govern Bengal and their other provinces with absolute authority, they were nominally only the vassals of the Mogul at Delhi, and of the Nabob at Moorshedabad. This system Hastings now put an end to, depriving the Nabob of even the slightest ostensible share in the government, and of half the income which Clive had assigned to him, and transferring the entire administration of the whole province to the servants of the company. The Mogul was treated with greater severity. His annual allowance from the company of 300,000*l.* a year was stopped altogether, and some districts which had been ceded to him were wrested from him, and sold to the nabob of Oude for half a million of money. For another sum of almost equal amount Hastings lent the Nabob the aid of a body of British troops to subdue the Rohillas, a tribe which, as the reward of military service, had in times past obtained from the Mogul a grant of the fertile plains between the western frontier of Oude and the Ganges, which, valiant as they were, they preserved in peace and increasing prosperity, while the surrounding provinces were a prey to the horrors and miseries of war. They had, however, violated their engagements to the nabob of Oude, the performance of which had been guaranteed by the company, and the Nabob was eager to crush them. And the money which was thus procured was skilfully applied to getting rid of nearly all the embarrassments which pressed most heavily on the company.

This relief from instant pressure enabled Hastings to turn his attention to carrying out the improvements in the whole system of administration which Clive had begun. Unfortunately, though governor-general, he had not the absolute authority enjoyed by his successors at the present time; but he was liable to be controlled by a council of five, of which he himself was a member, having, in cases of an equal division of opinion between the members present, a casting vote. This council was established at the same time that he himself was appointed governor-general, and three of the members were sent out from England, all previously unacquainted with

India, general Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis, the author of Junius, who, if we may trust a saying attributed to George III., seems to have received this appointment to secure the cessation of his writings. The other councillor was Mr. Barwell, an old servant of the company, and, as a man well acquainted with India, inclined to support the governor-general. But Francis, with his colleagues from England, set himself resolutely to work to oppose him on every point. They attacked his dealings with the nabob of Oude; they condemned his share in the Rohilla war; and at last began almost to invite the natives to prefer charges against him, which they, without any authority to do so, showed themselves prepared to entertain and to decide.

The quarrels between the governor-general and the majority of the council produced great scandal in England. Lord North desired to procure his recall, and the directors of the company were willing to grant it, but were overruled by the court of proprietors. Almost at the same time Monson and Clavering died, and, till their places could be filled up by instructions from England, Hastings, by his own and Barwell's vote, was supreme in the council. The times became more critical. France, as ally of the Americans, became the enemy of England, and it was soon understood that she had recommenced her intrigues with the ever-restless princes of India, and especially with the Peishwah, or ruler of the Mahrattas, a formidable tribe, whose principal city was Poonah, not far from Bombay. The sense of danger compelled lord North and the directors to lay aside all thoughts of recalling from India the only man capable of confronting it. Hastings' period of office, which was fixed by law at five years, was on the point of expiring. His appointment was renewed; and, feeling himself more firmly fixed in his seat, he began to adopt more decided measures. He at once attacked and reduced the French settlements, Chandernagore and Pondicherry, and sent an army under general Goddard into the country of the Mahrattas. Goddard was an able soldier. He speedily retrieved a disaster which had befallen an expedition from Bombay, took some of the strongest cities and fortresses of the country, and defeated Scindia and Holkar, the Mahratta chieftains, in a pitched battle.

War, however, began. Hyder Ali, thinking Hastings' attention fully occupied with the Mahrattas, again raised his standard, and invaded the territory of Madras with a numerous army, defeated one British division, and forced Munro, at the head of 5000 men, to retreat in disorder, abandoning all his baggage, stores, and artillery to his triumphant enemies. It was well for England and for India that Hastings was still the governor-general. A swift vessel bore to Calcutta the news of Hyder's irruption, and

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of the helplessness of the Madras authorities. Hastings' measures were taken in an instant. He made peace with the Mahrattas, sent large sums of money and large reinforcements of troops by sea to Madras, and entrusted the chief command to sir Eyre Coote, who had fortunately lately returned to India, and who, though no longer in the enjoyment of youth, health, or of the energy which had won him his reputation under the walls of Wandewash, was still a great soldier, and one feared by every power in India from the renown of his old exploits. At the beginning of 1781 Coote landed at Madras. He at once took the field, and Hyder, raising the sieges of Wandewash and Vellore, hastened to encounter him. Coote had about 9000 men. Hyder's forces were almost innumerable, and many of the regiments, and the whole of his artillery, were commanded by French officers. The two armies met at Porto Novo, a town on the coast a little to the south of Madras, where the British discipline and valour again proved irresistible. Before the end of the year Hyder sustained another defeat at Polilore. The next year he was again beaten at Arnee; and shortly afterwards both he and his conqueror died, Hyder being succeeded by his son Tippoo, a prince equal to him in courage and fondness for war, and not very inferior in capacity.

But the war with Hyder, though thus successful, involved the government in vast expenses beyond the ordinary amount of revenue; and to defray it Hastings was driven to fresh exactions from the native princes dependent upon, or tributary to the company. Benares, situated a little below the junction of the Jumna with the Ganges, was the foremost city in all India for wealth and sanctity; and its Rajah was regarded with especial reverence. He had formerly paid tribute to Oude; but the nabob of Oude had transferred his rights to the company, and the tribute had been paid at Calcutta with scrupulous regularity; but, on the breaking out of the Mahratta war, Hastings exacted from the Rajah a further contribution of 50,000*l.*, and repeated the exaction year after year, increasing his demands, till, at last, in 1781, he required a payment of half a million of money; and, when it was refused, proceeded himself to Benares, and arrested the Rajah in his own palace. He nearly brought destruction on himself. The populace of Benares, more warlike than that of most of the Indian cities, rose in defence of their sovereign, and for a day or two Hastings, who was only accompanied by one or two companies of sepoys, was in imminent personal danger. He barricaded the house in which he had taken up his lodging, and sent secret messages to the nearest military post for aid. Major Popham, an officer who had already distinguished himself by more than one deed of skill and gallantry, hastened with a sufficient force to extricate his chief, routed the

army which the Rajah had collected, and Hastings, as a punishment for the Rajah's resistance, added his territories to the dominions of the company.

His conduct at Benares was one of the acts for which he was afterwards most severely called to account; but the sums obtained from the Rajah had become the prize of the soldiers; and, as Hastings had need of money, he turned to the nabob of Oude, who, by complaining of the burden of some of the arrangements for the aid of the company's troops, to which, while in need of them, he had willingly consented, supplied Hastings with an excuse for further requisitions; and, as he was unable to procure the sums he demanded from the Nabob, whose indolence and incapacity had thrown all his affairs into a state of embarrassment, he exacted it from his mother and grandmother, the begums of Oude, imprisoning these princesses, and almost starving them till they paid 1,200,000*l.* for their ransom.

These acts of violence and extortion, not to be justified, and only to be at all excused on the imperious plea of state necessity, are the blots on Hastings' wise and beneficent career, which exposed him to the bitterest attacks ever made on a public man, whose personal uprightness and disinterestedness it was impossible to doubt; but they must not blind us to the general tenor of his government, which was not only eminently wise, far-sighted, and vigorous, but was also so humane and liberal, that it not only commanded the admiration and respect of all the English in India, whether in civil or military employments, but also conciliated the confidence and affection of the natives to an extent which no subsequent governor, able and successful as most of them have been, has ever succeeded in doing; and this universal popularity and reverence he acquired by no indulgence of evil passions, by no connivance at abuse. He won the good will of the natives, while depriving their princes of every semblance of power; he secured the attachment of the civil servants of the company, while checking with a firm hand all irregularity and excess of every kind, and while putting an end to the attempts of the judges to usurp a supreme and lucrative authority over the whole of Bengal; while, though not himself a soldier, his undaunted courage, and the evident military genius which he displayed on the occasion of the invasion of Hyder Ali, gained the esteem and love of the soldiers, so that, as he himself boasted, the alacrity with which they hastened to his rescue when he was in danger at Benares, was never exceeded by any display of attachment to their own officers.

To his country in general his services had been incalculable in the eyes of all who duly value the stability of our Indian empire. England, during the greater part of his administration, was engaged

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in war with America, backed by the chief powers of Europe. In America she met with great disasters; in Europe she did not escape some important losses; but in India (in spite of the intrigues of the French, not long before equal, and perhaps superior to us in the opinion of most of the natives) the same period produced nothing but increase of territory, of revenue, of power, and of reputation, while the French themselves were for a while completely expelled from the whole continent, though they subsequently re-established themselves on the Madras coast; and though at the conclusion of peace, the places which Hastings had wrested from them were restored to them.

The obloquy with which he was assailed in England on his return he himself received a grateful testimony that he had survived, when, in 1813, on his appearing in the house of commons to give evidence on an enquiry into the affairs of the company, the whole of the assembled members stood up uncovered to receive him; and, in India, we are told by a great writer,* personally acquainted with the scene of his labours, and certainly not inclined to extenuate his questionable actions, the natives still speak of him with reverence as the greatest of Englishmen.

But, successful as the administration of Hastings had been, it was evident that that success was owing solely to his own genius, and that the whole system of the government of India was faulty. In India the governor was controlled by the council. In England the ministers and the directors united were unable to recall a governor, however desirable it might be to do so, unless they could obtain the consent of the court of proprietors, where money could create such numbers of fictitious votes as to destroy the weight which otherwise might have been attached to their decisions. Fox, therefore, employed the parliamentary recess in devising a measure to remedy these evils; and, when the houses met in November, he introduced a bill, vesting the future direction of the company in seven directors, named in it, whose successors were to be appointed by the ministers, with a subordinate board of assistant-directors to be appointed by the proprietors of the India stock, but removable by the directors. Other clauses of the bill went into minute details of the manner in which the directors were to exercise the vast powers entrusted to them. It was vigorously opposed by Pitt, on the grounds that it was a violation of the charters and privileges of the company; that, by erecting and investing with such powers a board neither elected by the people, nor removable by the crown, it was an equal violation of the principles of the English constitution: and that by placing, as it did, the whole of the patron-

* Mr. Macaulay, to whose exquisite sketches of Clive and Hastings the author has been greatly indebted.

age of India in the hands of the ministers, it was giving them the means of securing a perpetuity of their own power. The bill, however, was passed by large majorities in the commons; but when it arrived in the house of lords, it was again denounced by lord Thurlow, who was known to be in great favour with the king, as a measure calculated to take the crown from the king's head, and to place it on that of Mr. Fox. The king himself was easily persuaded to take a similar view of it, and to let a declaration on his part be known, that he would consider as his enemies whoever voted for it. Fox in vain endeavoured to frighten the peers from being influenced by the royal wish, by supporting and carrying through the house of commons a resolution that, "to report any opinion of his majesty upon any bill depending in either house of parliament, is a high crime and misdemeanour, derogatory to the honour of the crown, a breach of the fundamental privileges of parliament, and subversive of the constitution of the country." Nor can it be denied that the resolution was well founded, and that the king was ill advised in permitting his name to be used as it was used; but the opinion of the commons had no weight in the upper house, which, on the 17th December, rejected the bill, and the next day the king dismissed the ministry, marking the excess of his resentment against North and Fox, by refusing to receive the seals from them in person, but desiring them to send them by their under-secretaries.

CHAPTER LXIII.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

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1784.



HE coalition, which, as Fox himself had confessed, could only be justified by its success, had thus failed; and, when the king now again applied to Pitt to undertake the government, Pitt considered that those who had formed it had lost so much character and strength by their failures, as to render his chance of being able to retain the power offered him more probable. He, therefore, now accepted the offices of first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer. Lord Carmarthen and Sidney were the secretaries of state; Thurlow was lord chancellor; and the treasurership of the navy was given to one, who soon, though only in a subordinate situation, became

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a most important and influential member of the ministry, Mr. Dundas.

The new minister had great difficulties to encounter. He had but a scanty majority in the lords, a decided minority in the commons. He himself was young and inexperienced, while his adversaries had a long acquaintance with parliamentary tactics; and two of them, Burke and Fox, were most consummate orators and debaters; but Fox's disappointment and anger at his late defeat were so furious, that in his opposition to his successors, he lost sight of every principle of the constitution. The majority of the house of commons was so clearly in his favour, that it was evident that it must soon be dissolved; and, as his hope of recovering his power rested on its support, he asserted, in defiance not only of constitutional law, but of common sense also, that the crown had not the power of dissolving the parliament in the middle of a session; and, in accordance with this declaration, demanded from Pitt a promise that no dissolution should take place. Pitt, who was never surpassed in the promptitude with which he discerned and took advantage of the mistakes of an adversary, loftily refused to bargain away the royal prerogative in the house of commons; and, with resolute calmness, resolved to fight the battle of the constitution in the face of an adverse majority, confident that the good sense of the people would gradually range them on his side. He was not deceived. Fox and his adherents carried several motions, increasing in vehemence, to condemn or prevent a dissolution, declaring that, if the parliament should be dissolved, it would be a high crime in any minister to disburse money for any service to which it had not been appropriated by the representatives of the people, and that the present ministers had not the confidence of the Parliament. They rejected an Indian bill brought in by Pitt, and then attacked him for not yielding to the opinion of the commons, so repeatedly and so clearly expressed, and resigning his office. Pitt maintained the propriety of his forbearing to resign, when such a resignation would leave the country without any government at all.

Meantime his reputation kept on rising with the people, who watched, with interest not unmixed with astonishment, the struggle which he was maintaining single-handed against such numerous and such formidable antagonists, till the general wish began to be, not that he should yield to, but rather that he should coalesce with his adversaries. He was not unwilling to entertain such a proposal, and the king expressed to the duke of Portland a desire that he would confer with Pitt on the subject. The prospect of a strong administration thus held out, was destroyed by the petulant obstinacy of the duke, who insisted that, as a preliminary to negotiation, Pitt should submit to the declared wish of the house of

commons by resigning his office. Pitt, with proper spirit, replied that he would not march out of his post with a halter round his neck, change his armour, and beg to be admitted as a volunteer in the army of the enemy, but declared his willingness to treat on equal terms. It was soon made apparent, however, that Fox and his party would be satisfied with no arrangement which did not give them a decided superiority; and, after a few days, the negotiation was wholly broken off.

Fox meditated a refusal of the supplies; and actually succeeded in compelling Pitt to postpone the ordnance estimates, though his majority on this question was only twelve, being the smallest which had ever mustered on his side; and many, even of those who had voted with him, soon repented of this vote, which was very ill received by the country. which began to think Fox more solicitous for the gratification of his own ambition and resentment than for the general welfare. Even that scanty majority he found would fail him if he attempted, as he at one time contemplated, opposing the usual mutiny bill; at last a long address to the king, praying him to remove the ministers, was carried only by a majority of one, and he felt it useless to protract the contest; Pitt, on his part, saw that the country was now sufficiently on his side, and, on the 25th of March, the parliament was dissolved.

In this extraordinary struggle it must be remembered, that as the house of lords was favourable to Pitt as well as the king, the point contended for by Fox would have made the house of commons supreme over both the other portions of the legislature. He did not venture to frame any of the motions or resolutions, which he carried against Pitt, so that the concurrence of the house of lords could be asked to them; nor, as the king pointed out in his reply to one of the addresses presented to him by the commons, was his objection to Pitt as minister based on any offence or error which Pitt was alleged to have committed. Moreover, his repugnance to a dissolution betrayed a consciousness that the people in general were not with him, since, if they had been, a new election must have been the most favourable event possible for his interests. His warmest advocates blame the course which he took on this occasion, as one, like his coalition with lord North, only to be justified by success; and, like that coalition, condemned by its decided failure.

To this contest we may trace the formation of the modern Tory party. Pitt, during the latter years of his administration, and ever since his death, has been looked upon as a Tory minister; but his was not the Toryism of lord Bute and lord North: to the latter of whom he was so opposed, that he refused to sit in the same cabinet with him. On the contrary, he entered public life

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as a Whig; and it was only by gradual steps that he was forced into a divergence from or modification of his original politics, from which he was driven first by the violence with which Fox on this occasion exaggerated the Whig principle of the supremacy of the commons, in order to eject him from office, and (though for a while in the debates on the regency, Fox, on the other hand, asserted the most extreme Tory doctrines, and the two champions appeared mutually to have changed sides) he was still further separated from his original party by their vehement approval of the French revolution; and the necessary and continued resistance to the principles which Fox then avowed, drove him, and still more his successors, further from his original line, till at last the two parties seemed hardly to have one political principle in common.

The elections showed the feelings with which the nation at large regarded the conduct of the two leaders, by giving Pitt so decided a majority as reduced his adversaries to complete helplessness, and for a time almost to inaction, and gave him the power to carry all his measures unresisted and unaltered. He reintroduced the India bill which had been rejected at the beginning of the year, extricating the company from its financial difficulties, and establishing a new system of government, which erected a board of control to superintend the affairs of India conjointly with the directors, gave the governor-general supreme power in India, and made him responsible to the authorities at home for his judicious exercise of it; the whole of the arrangements being so judiciously conceived that they were maintained without any material alteration for three-quarters of a century, when at last, under the pressure of circumstances which will be mentioned hereafter, it was found necessary to transfer the supreme authority from the company to the crown. He applied himself at the same time to correcting the disorders into which the finances of the kingdom had fallen; the yearly revenue coming short of the expenditure by no less than two millions of money, while smuggling was carried on to such an extent that of some articles it was estimated that not one-half of the quantity imported paid any contribution to the revenue. To check this evil he reduced some of the heaviest duties, while by fresh taxes so equally distributed as to be burdensome to no class of the population, he more than made up the deficiency of the revenue, and in a short time the trade of the country flourished so greatly under his new regulations, that he was able to set apart a considerable annual sum as a sinking fund to effect the reduction of the national debt. Even Fox himself allowed that he deserved infinite credit for the courage with which he grappled with the difficulties of the exchequer, and he received the cordial support of many of those members who had been most strongly pledged to oppose him.

In England he continued his exertions in the cause of parliamentary reform, bringing in, though unsuccessfully, a bill more precise and minute in its details than that which had formerly been defeated; he provided for the disfranchisement of many decayed boroughs, and established a standard according to which other boroughs, in subsequent ages, should be considered decayed, and, as such, should be disfranchised; but in Ireland, where the volunteers, gradually allowing themselves to be made the tools of artful demagogues, were attempting to overawe the parliament into the adoption of a somewhat similar measure, he firmly discountenanced proceedings so supported; while, at the same time, he applied himself to weaken the cry for reform in that country, by commercial concessions of great importance, placing the Irish commerce and manufactures on an equality with those of England, though the bills which he introduced with that object, after passing through the English parliament, were defeated in the Irish house of commons by the jealousy or selfishness which actuated a large proportion of the Irish politicians.

He now applied himself to the re-establishment of the sinking fund for the reduction of the national debt on a more efficient, and also on a more secure footing than that on which it had stood in Walpole's time, since which it had been neglected; the economy which he had introduced into the public departments, and the extent to which trade had increased under his new commercial regulations, enabled him to set apart a million a year for the fund, without adding to the burdens of the people; and he conferred further benefits on the commerce of the nation by treaties with France and Spain, factiously opposed by Fox, who maintained that France and England were natural and unalterable enemies; but more justly praised by Fox's biographer, as based on sound commercial principles. It would exceed the limits of the present work to detail the different plans for simplifying the entire system of taxation, which this great minister introduced, and which won the cordial praise of even his most persevering opponents. No minister before him had ever given a careful study to the principles of political economy, but now Pitt reduced them to practice, and won for them the general assent of the community by the demonstration of their merits when brought into extensive operation.

The only exception to the general spirit of liberality and enlightenment which governed all his policy, was the resistance which he made to the repeal of the test and corporation acts, which for forty years longer still held their place among our statutes; and his maintenance of which was the more singular, as he subsequently appeared not adverse to granting to the Roman Catholics the liberty which he now denied to the Dissenters.

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During the years 1787 and 1788 the attention of the parliament was mainly occupied by matters of a more private character. The prince of Wales, whose allowance when he came of age in 1783, had been fixed by the king at a lower sum than the ministers thought advisable, found himself considerably in debt, and, as the king objected to assisting him, he made large reductions in his establishment, which he placed on a footing suited to a private individual, rather than such as was expected from the heir apparent of the kingdom. At last, in 1787, the opposition took up the question as an engine of annoyance to the government, proposing an address to the king to relieve the prince from his embarrassments. Their interference provoked allusions to a report that the prince was married to a Roman Catholic lady, a Mrs. Fitzherbert; as such a marriage, if duly solemnized, would have deprived the prince of his right of succession to the crown, and of his position as heir apparent, which was made the plea for the parliamentary grant intended to be proposed. But the prince authorized Fox to deny in the most positive manner, that any such marriage had taken place in any way whatsoever; though it is now certain that the ceremony had been performed by a Protestant clergyman; and that the prince fancied he had escaped from the consequent forfeiture of his right of succession, by the royal marriage act, passed a few years before, which made such a marriage, without the consent of the reigning sovereign, invalid. The denial, however, thus authoritatively made, commanded belief at the time, and, in consequence, George III. consented to the prince's debts being paid, though, as his income was but slightly augmented, the arrangement now made did not prevent him from becoming similarly involved again.

The same year the house of commons resolved to prefer articles of impeachment against Warren Hastings, for some of the acts of his Indian administration. Burke, whose glowing imagination and ardent humanity were easily excited by any tale of cruelty and oppression, had permitted his mind to dwell on the severity with which Hastings had treated the rajah of Benares, the princesses of Oude, and one or two other persons, till he became blind to the great benefits which India in general had received from his administration, and thought of nothing but punishing him for the one or two actions which, however beneficial to his masters, the East India Company, were certainly not to be justified on any principles of strict morality or justice. Hastings had returned from India in 1785, and the next year Burke, and Sheridan, the member for Stafford, who, though a very young man, was already widely known as the author of some of the best comedies in the language, began to bring the question before the house of commons in speeches fraught with a vehement eloquence, which, by the con-

fession of all who heard them, has never been surpassed. So numerous were the charges which they, supported by the whole power of the opposition, brought forward, that they could not all be discussed in one session, and the consideration of them was renewed this year; when Pitt and Dundas assented to the impeachment, not without some inconsistency, since Dundas had pronounced some of Hastings' measures the salvation of India; and since, on the first article on which Pitt voted against him, he rested his opinion, not on any general principle, but on a mere question of detail. At a later period, Dundas, with singular indiscretion, avowed his object to have been to prevent the returned governor from being nominated one of the board of control; and, we may probably add, to deprive him of any open display of the favour of the king, who was known to regard him with high approbation. The trial began in the spring of 1788, and never had legal justice appeared in a more imposing form. The peers of Great Britain were the judges, the commons of Great Britain were the accusers, the defendant was one who had long been the governor of vast dominions, far more extensive than his native land, the greater part of which he had himself brought under her sway; the spectators were the sovereign of the kingdom with his family, and a numerous company of the noblest and fairest of the land, attracted, some by sympathy with the accused, some by admiration of the marvellous eloquence already displayed by the managers of the impeachment, and by the expectation of similar displays now; nor were they disappointed: again did Burke and Sheridan and their colleagues vie with one another and with their own previous efforts, in every variety of oratory; now pressing their case on the judges with close reasoning, now electrifying their audience with impassioned declamation; at one time painting in glowing colours the sacred majesty of justice and humanity, at another, in words that burn, demanding retribution, and invoking vengeance on oppression and cruelty, though perpetrated, at the furthest extremity of the globe, on nations and individuals till then unheard of in Europe. It was not till more than seven years after Burke opened the case in Westminster Hall that the trial was concluded, Hastings being acquitted by a large majority on every one of the charges brought against him; while his personal integrity was abundantly proved by the fact that, long as he had enjoyed the supreme power in a country where, at that time, every one amassed a fortune in a few years, his savings were insufficient to defray the expenses of the trial, and he was forced to trust to the liberality of the East India Company for defraying those expenses, and for providing him with the means of passing the rest of his days in moderate comfort and affluence.

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Pitt's system was very different from his father's: all his views were directed to the preservation of peace, as a far surer mode of increasing the prosperity of a country than augmentations of dominion made by war, and liable again to be lost by war; and it was in peace that his talents were calculated to shine with the greatest brilliancy: at the same time, there was nothing timid or shrinking in his policy. On the contrary, one of the means which he took to preserve peace was showing that he was prepared for war, and he was the first minister who saw the necessity of fortifying our dockyards at home and our most assailable settlements abroad; and a great deal of our early success in the next war was owing to his well-timed vigilance, exerted when many of his opponents saw no necessity for it. And in 1787 an occasion arose which showed more plainly still his resolution not to allow his love of peace to lead him to any abandonment of the honour of England. The states of Holland had lately risen against the stadtholder, and deprived him of his authority. The soldiers had even treated his wife, the princess of Orange, who was sister to the king of Prussia, with great outrage; and it became apparent that they relied on the assistance of the French, who marched an army to the frontier to support them, in the event of the king of Prussia taking up arms, as he threatened, to avenge the indignity offered to the princess. Pitt immediately sent an envoy to Paris, Mr. William Grenville, afterwards lord Grenville, who remonstrated so strongly against the interference of France in the affair, announcing that such a step on their part would compel England also to interfere, and would perhaps light up the flames of war over the whole continent, that, though the Prussian troops overran Holland and re-established the stadtholder at the Hague, the French renounced all idea of engaging in the quarrel, recalled their troops, and peace was preserved; nor must we omit to add, to the honour of Fox and his adherents, that they cordially approved of all the steps taken in this matter, showing that personal ambition and party prejudice were alike forgotten by them when the good faith of England to her allies and her just weight in the councils of Europe were at stake.

The year 1788 exhibited the minister, the parliament, and, indeed, the people in general in a most honourable light, uniting to terminate a great evil, the existence, or at least the extent of which had been brought to light only so recently, that they are entitled to the credit of having begun to put an end to it as soon as it was revealed. It was known that the plantations in the West Indies were cultivated by slaves brought from the African coast; but the wickedness of the means taken to procure them, and the fearful sufferings to which they were exposed,

were wholly unsuspected. Fortunately for the interests of humanity, and for the glory of England, their wrongs and miseries attracted the notice of a most remarkable man, singularly fitted, both by nature and circumstances, to be the champion of their cause.

William Wilberforce, whose blameless and useful life was continued to the present generation, was now in the prime of life; possessed of ample fortune, of great industry and talents for business, and of an eloquence remarkable even at a period and in an assembly unrivalled for the number and genius of its orators. He had also, though young, become deeply imbued with the sentiments of the most earnest religion, which, teaching him that the continuance of such a traffic was not only a disgrace, but a sin, supplied him with a motive for insisting on its abolition strong enough to enable him to persevere, in spite of all the discouragements of delay, defeat, the calumny of enemies, and the lukewarmness of friends, till after a few years his exertions were crowned by complete success in the abolition of the slave-trade. He now, with the impressive energy of heartfelt sincerity, laid before the house the way in which it exposed the whole African coast to desolation; the princes of every petty tribe making war on their neighbours in order to procure captives to sell to the slave-merchants, and, when that supply failed, kidnapping even their own subjects and burning their own villages, to make a profit by the sale of the harmless inhabitants, while the sufferings to which the captives were exposed on their voyage from their native land were such as to baffle all description, and even all conception. Penned like sheep between decks so low that they were unable even to sit up, they were closely packed side by side for six weeks, in a tropical climate, barely sustained in life by scanty and unwholesome food, while the diseases which hunger and confinement daily engendered were so aggravated by dirt, and neglect, and the foul exhalations by which they were surrounded, that it was computed that on an average one-half perished before they were able to be put to work. Horrors like these needed no eloquence to exaggerate them; and the impression produced by the bare recital of them united every generous heart in the resolution to put an end to such abominations. Pitt, who was connected with Wilberforce by ties of the closest intimacy, cordially supported his friend; Burke, Fox, and Sheridan were equally loud and sincere in their denunciations of the evil, and in their expressions of their admiration for and gratitude to the speaker, who undertook the task of grappling with it. Still its suppression could not be accomplished in an instant. The owners of the slave ships at Liverpool raised an outcry against any interference with what they looked on as a lucrative branch of trade;

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many of the West Indian planters resisted any measure which could have a tendency to diminish the supply of labour ; the king, always inclined to look upon any innovation on established practices as in itself the worst possible of evils, was not disposed to favour any sweeping measure. Many, even of the sincere friends of the negro, dreaded proceeding with too much precipitation, lest such conduct should give rise to disturbances, and even to insurrection among the slaves already in the West Indies ; and for this year Wilberforce was forced to be content with a bill materially lessening the horrors of the Middle Passage, as the voyage across the Atlantic was called ; and to trust to time for enabling him to accomplish his great object of the entire abolition of the trade, which he did not succeed in carrying till nearly twenty years afterwards.

In the autumn of the same year the attention of the parliament was occupied by an affair of a most novel and embarrassing character. The king, after a short illness, proved to be entirely deranged, and it was consequently necessary to take steps for the appointment of a regency. It was evident that the prince of Wales was the person whom, as the heir to the throne, it was most natural to appoint. It was certain also, that, as soon as he was appointed, he would remove the present ministry, and instal Fox and his party in their places. George III. had not been an indulgent father to him ; and, since he came of age, he had identified himself with the opposition, some of the leaders of which party, especially Fox and Sheridan, were his most intimate personal friends ; men by their brilliant wit and gaiety eminently fitted to attract the notice and rivet the good will of a prince, himself possessed of great natural talents, which had been highly cultivated, and of a well-bred gaiety of heart, and refinement of manners, which enabled him to appreciate and to enjoy the social accomplishments which distinguished the Whig leaders. Not that in natural wit and liveliness Pitt was inferior to his rivals ; but he was too fully occupied by the cares of office to be able to devote himself to society ; and his principles were of too rigid a character to allow him to mingle freely in the scenes of dissipation in which Fox unfortunately too much delighted, and into which the prince was easily seduced ; moreover, in his character of minister to the father, he had been in some degree placed in a situation of antagonism to the son. It is possible that the knowledge of the prince's bias may in some degree have affected the view which he took of the question under consideration, as it certainly prompted Fox to the eager vehemence which he displayed on the other side. Pitt announced the king's illness to the house of commons, and moved the appointment of a committee to search for precedents. Fox ridiculed the idea of appointing such a com-

mittee, on the ground that it was notorious that there were no precedents bearing on the case; asserting, moreover, that the prince of Wales had as inalienable a right to the regency, as he would have had to the crown in the event of the king's death.

"I'll unwhig the gentleman for the rest of his life," was Pitt's exclamation when he heard this strange doctrine so broadly asserted by one who had so lately claimed such supreme authority for the house of commons; but, when he himself, while properly upholding the claims of parliament to decide the matter, proceeded to affirm that the prince had no more right to the regency than any other individual in the kingdom, he pronounced an opinion which, though logically correct, was so at variance with the common feeling on the subject that he was forced to explain it by stating his meaning to be that the prince had no legal right whatever till it was conferred on him by the parliament, admitting, at the same time, that the prince was the fittest person in the kingdom to be appointed, and that he had no intention of proposing any one else. Accordingly a bill was brought in conferring the regency on the prince, with a few necessary limitations arising from the vicarious and temporary nature of the powers to be conferred; and Fox was beginning already to arrange the distribution of the different offices in the administration, the formation of which was to be entrusted to him, when, on the 19th of February, after the bill had been read a second time in the house of lords, it was announced that the king was so far recovered as to be able to resume his attention to business, and further proceedings were in consequence rendered unnecessary.

CHAPTER LXIV.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

IN the summer of the year 1789 the revolution broke out in France, an event which ultimately caused the greatest derangement of Pitt's policy, but which at first was not expected by any one to give rise to war, and seemed likely rather to strengthen the minister by the division which it caused among the opposition; Fox speaking of it as a most glorious achievement, and one which wholly removed his former prepossessions against the French; while Burke, with more accurate foresight, though he freely admitted the grievances under which the

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French people suffered, saw in their present fury nothing but misery to themselves, and disquiet and distress to the rest of Europe.

The dangers which threatened the continuance of peace seemed to impend from other quarters. Some British merchants having established themselves on the north-western coast of America, near Nootka Sound, with the view of establishing a trade in furs and other commodities of those regions, the Spanish government, under pretence that they had thus trespassed on the rights granted to Ferdinand and Isabella by the pope in the fifteenth century, sent a small squadron, which demolished the buildings, and carried off the merchants as prisoners to Mexico. Pitt instantly demanded reparation for the insult, and the abandonment of the claim thus set up, so vigorously, that the Spaniards, finding that no aid could be expected from France, submitted to all his demands, and consented to the establishment by the British of any settlements which they might desire to found on either coast of America, to the north of the existing possessions of Spain.

The next danger arose in the opposite corner of Europe. Russia, being at war with Turkey, had lately taken the strongly fortified towns of Ismail and Oczakov; and Pitt, unable by negotiation to procure favourable terms for Turkey, suddenly augmented the navy, and delivered a message from the king to the house of commons, that this additional armament was caused by the possibility of open resistance to the encroachments of Russia becoming necessary. The measures however thus taken and justified by the ministry, were so vigorously attacked by the opposition in a series of motions, in the debates on which Mr. Grey, afterwards lord Grey, particularly distinguished himself, that they were not persevered in, though they perhaps were not without effect in inducing Russia to moderate her tone in her subsequent negotiations with Turkey.

As long as it was possible to preserve peace, the country, under the wise system of finance and commerce now adopted, continued to increase in wealth and prosperity with unexampled rapidity. The revenue rose so greatly and so steadily that, at the beginning of 1792, Pitt was able to take off some of the taxes, even while devoting a larger sum to the sinking fund than had ever been contemplated. But the French revolution was spreading apprehensions throughout Europe that had an unfortunate tendency to realise themselves. The continental sovereigns were easily persuaded that monarchy itself was endangered; and, in the summer of 1792, the duke of Brunswick, as commander of the Austrian and Prussian armies, invaded France, having first issued a proclamation intended to secure the safety of the royal family of

France, who were detained in prison in Paris; but, in effect, giving their enemies a terrible handle to work for their destruction, by affording a pretext for representing Louis as leagued with the enemies of their country. England alone of the great European powers declined to join in such a demonstration of hostility to the new French government, though at a later period the English ambassador in Paris was directed to express the king's solicitude for the safety of the French royal family, and the most cordial sympathy for them was expressed by the leaders of both parties in parliament, in the vain hope that the knowledge of this general feeling in their favour might at least have the effect of saving their lives.

But, though the government was thus careful of giving offence to the French, the people in general were not indifferent to the events that were taking place so near to them, or blind to the dangers with which those events seemed to threaten the peace of Europe. On the contrary, many of the leaders of the opposition, preferring their country to their party, openly declared that a crisis had arrived at which the government must be supported, and showed themselves prepared to give a practical effect to their declaration. Burke had already separated himself from the admirers of the revolution, breaking off even all private friendship with Fox, whom he looked upon as the disseminator of the most dangerous doctrines; and now the Whig party in general showed a willingness to unite with the minister in his resistance to the new fangled doctrines which, it was feared, were rapidly making proselytes in England. Pitt gladly expressed his willingness to accept the proffered alliance, and proposals were made to Fox which would have placed half the offices in the ministry at his disposal. To the surprise of his friends, Fox was found unusually ill-humoured and impracticable. Like lord Chatham in 1763, he disdained the appearance of joining an existing ministry; then he was afraid of seeming to be acting under Pitt; at last the negotiations were wholly broken off, in consequence of his objections, though so untenable did they appear to his friends (and no statesman has ever had such a number of personal friends, who made their attachment to him one of their chief motives of action) that, before the end of the next year, the greater part of them formally abandoned him, and became avowed supporters of the ministry, in which the duke of Portland, with one or two more, accepted important offices.

Still Pitt hoped to maintain peace. On the king of France being formally deposed by the national assembly, the English ambassador had been recalled from Paris, on the ground that the government to which he had been sent no longer existed; but he had been ordered, before quitting the country, to assure the leading

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French statesmen of the desire of England to preserve a strict neutrality; and the French ambassador remained in London; so that Pitt declared, in his place in parliament, that he saw no danger of war; and, in fact, he was more apprehensive of disturbances at home, from a revolutionary and seditious spirit, which he believed that the admirers of the new French system were endeavouring to excite among the English people; some of them, with Mr. Grey at their head, having formed a society to which they gave the name of the Friends of the People, which, as Fox, who defended though he refused to join it, admitted, contained some violent republicans; but, at the end of 1792, the French, getting more violent every day, openly attacked Holland, and published a decree, declaring every nation their enemy which, rejecting liberty and equality, chose to preserve its princes and its privileged orders. Even Fox, who, only three days before, was so furious in his opposition to the ministers, as to declare that there was no address to the king which Pitt could possibly frame, that he would not propose an amendment to, and divide the house upon, was for a short time somewhat sobered by this extravagant declaration of war against the whole world, and by the inhumanity with which the French assembly was treating Louis XVI., whom they had now separated from his family; but, after a few days, he recurred to his old tactics, and, at a public dinner, attended by many of his party, gave, as his last toast, the "Majesty of the People."

On the 21st of January, 1793, Louis XVI. was beheaded in Paris; and, on the receipt of this intelligence, the English ministers ordered the French ambassador to leave London. Letters recalling him had already been despatched from Paris, where M. Monge, the minister of marine, had publicly announced the intention of making a descent on England, and of planting the sacred tree of liberty on the soil of that island; and, on the 3rd of February, the French government formally declared war against Great Britain.

The first efforts of Great Britain were neither very vigorous, nor very successful. Alliances were formed with Austria and Prussia. The parliament cordially supported the war, voting large supplies; but the whole force sent to the Continent consisted of only 20,000 men, which, with 10,000 Hanoverians, were placed under the command of the duke of York, the second son of the king, a young prince of great courage, and of the most popular manners, but of no experience in war. He landed in the Netherlands in the spring of 1793, and joined the main army of the allies; the generalissimo of the whole force being the prince of Saxe-Coburg, an officer of very moderate abilities.

Our space forbids us to enter into the general details of the

campaign, except where our own countrymen were engaged. It was to them that the siege of Valenciennes, one of the most important fortresses on the Flemish frontier, was committed; and they pressed it with such activity, that the town capitulated in a fortnight; but, with great impolicy, it was taken possession of for the emperor, a proceeding which gave an idea that the allies entertained a project of dismembering France, and perhaps of dividing her, as some of them had lately divided Poland; and which thus, instead of enabling them to take advantage of the divisions existing among the Frenchmen of different political parties, united them all in defence of their common country.

Greater importance was attached to the revolt of Toulon, the citizens of which great seaport, terrified at the atrocities which the revolutionary party had committed in Lyons and Marseilles, revolted, and invited the English fleet, which, under lord Hood, was cruising in the gulf of Lyons, to come to their assistance. Lord Hood gladly entered the harbour. Spain, which was also at war with France, furnished a garrison of land forces; and the commanders of the two countries took possession of the town in the name of Louis XVII.

The news of this event produced great exultation in England, where the ministers looked upon it as an indication of the general feeling of France, which must be decisive of the ultimate issue of the war; but it produced only disappointment. The French government instantly besieged Toulon with an army, which, chiefly in consequence of the genius displayed by the commander of the artillery, Napoleon Buonaparte, then only twenty-four years of age, proved irresistible; and, before the end of the year, the allies were forced to evacuate the town, having first destroyed a magnificent French fleet which was in the harbour, and having taken the citizens who were most compromised by the revolt on board the English squadron.

The measures necessary to be taken for the continuance of the war, at the beginning of the next year, gave rise to warm debates in the house of commons, remarkable chiefly for the mistaken prophecies in which both parties indulged. The ministers urged that France was so nearly exhausted by her efforts in the last campaign, that the continuance of our exertions for a short period more must complete her subjugation. The opposition, equally believing in the weakness of France, argued that, as she could not possibly carry out, or even entertain any views of aggrandizement, we might feel perfectly secured against all danger, without distressing ourselves, and burdening our posterity for allies, of whom Austria was only desirous to make us a tool for the furtherance of her own objects, and Prussia was watching for the first opportunity to desert us.

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The parliament, however, agreed with the ministers, and granted unprecedented supplies both of men and money.

On the Continent no advantage of any moment was gained. The English troops distinguished themselves highly in an action under the walls of Landrecy, but shared in the defeat of Turcoing, where the duke of York himself was only saved from being taken prisoner by the speed of his horse. Throughout the whole campaign the French generals, Pichegru, Souham, Jourdan, and Moreau, (the two last of whom subsequently attained the highest military reputation,) displayed a superiority of skill, which produced great disasters to the allies. The duke of York was forced to retire from the French frontier towards Holland, and, being gradually driven further back by the overpowering numbers of the enemy, in the winter returned to England.

But where England could carry on the war without being encumbered by her allies, she had very different success. In the West Indies a military and naval force, under admiral sir John Jervis and general sir Charles Grey, reduced all the islands belonging to the French. In the Mediterranean admiral Hotham defeated a fleet considerably superior in numbers to his own; and on the western coast of France, on the 1st of June, lord Howe gained a complete victory over a splendid fleet, commanded by Villaret Joyeuse, an officer of high reputation, taking six ships of the line, and rendering the rest almost incapable of any future service.

This victory encouraged the government to make greater efforts than ever. Prussia had openly declared its intention to quit the confederacy, and Austria was known to be secretly cherishing the same designs; nor could Pitt prevail on her to continue the war without granting her a subsidy of 6,000,000*l.*, a measure which again roused the opposition to the most vigorous resistance, but which was sanctioned by a large majority in Parliament. Negotiations were also entered into with Russia, the ruler of which country, the empress Catharine, saw the progress of the French with great uneasiness, and now concluded a treaty with Great Britain and Austria, though without contributing any accession of strength to the objects of the alliance.

The campaign of 1795 greatly resembled that of the preceding year. By land our efforts were productive of no advantage; in fact, our chief enterprise, the assistance of a body of emigrants, who landed in Quiberon Bay, on the coast of the province of La Vendée, only caused great calamities to the heroic Vendéans, who were thus encouraged to a premature insurrection, and easily crushed by Hoche, the ablest military leader who had as yet appeared in the French armies; but again our fleet rode triumphant

over the seas, and the French received from lord Bridport a second defeat, which, though not as decisive as that of the 1st of June, was sufficient to show them the hopelessness of attempting to cope with the British on their own element, and to confine them to their harbours for the remainder of the year.

While affairs were proceeding in this manner abroad, at home the ministry gained strength by some occurrences, and lost it by others. They gained strength by the open accession to their ranks of some of the leaders of the Whig party, who now finally separated from Fox; the duke of Portland, lord Fitzwilliam, lord Spencer, and Mr. Wyndham becoming members of the cabinet, in the spring of 1794. But they lost strength, though in an inferior degree, by some impolitic prosecutions. The belief in the existence of secret seditious societies had induced both houses of parliament to suspend the habeas corpus act, and to pass stringent laws against the existence of such bodies, and treasonable designs were proved against a society established in Edinburgh, where two men, named Watta, and Donnie, were convicted of a plot to effect an armed rising, and executed. But in England it was not imputed to these societies that they had made any preparation for carrying out their designs by force; nevertheless, it was determined to prosecute the leaders, Hardy, Horne Tooke, Thelwall, and others, not for a seditious misdemeanour, of which they might probably have been convicted, but for high treason, in compassing the death of the king, a charge wholly unsupported by evidence. Mr. Erskine, one of the most celebrated pleaders who had ever adorned the English bar, obtained great credit by the skill and eloquence with which he conducted their defence; but his genius was not needed to ensure their acquittal, which certainly damaged the ministers, as political prosecutions on manifestly insufficient grounds ought to do.

Every year the necessity of applying to parliament for supplies for the war produced the same result, a debate carried on with the most admirable ability by both parties, and the success of the minister in all his proposals. In Europe no engagements between the French and English took place in 1795; but in the East Indies, and at the Cape of Good Hope, the Dutch, who had now been compelled to become allies of the French, were deprived of their most valuable settlements. But in the mean time France herself had met with great success against the Austrians on the Rhine, and had detached the Spaniards from the English alliance, by which step she gained a valuable reinforcement for her fleet, and the consideration of the whole state of affairs at home and abroad determined Pitt, who was always desirous of peace, to open a negotiation for that object with the French government.

A.D. 1796.

England has often been accused of losing as much by her inferiority in diplomacy as she gained in war ; but at this time an English nobleman, lord Malmesbury, was one of the ablest diplomatists in Europe, and he was now sent to Paris with full powers. The terms which he was authorized to offer were very honourable to his country. She alone of the allies had lost nothing, and had made large acquisitions ; but she now offered to restore all her conquests, in order to procure a similar restitution to her allies on the part of France. It was soon apparent, however, that the French were determined to continue the war, though they protracted the negotiations as long as possible, and tried to throw the blame of their failure upon us ; but, as lord Malmesbury's admirable temper and address gave them no opportunity of so doing, they at last, deriving additional courage from Buonaparte's brilliant campaign in the north of Italy, broke off the negotiation abruptly, and desired lord Malmesbury to leave Paris.

The failure of these negotiations was a great disappointment to Pitt, whose commercial system, to which he had deservedly trusted so much, was wholly deranged by the war, and who now saw himself surrounded with embarrassments arising from the vast increase of the national debt, and from the great drain on the resources of the country which had been caused by the subsidies granted to foreign powers. The funds had fallen alarmingly, and for a moment many of those best acquainted with monetary affairs apprehended a national bankruptcy ; which was only avoided by Pitt's issuing an order in council, relieving the Bank of England by suspending cash payments ; and, though the policy of such an order was vehemently attacked by the opposition, it was approved of by a great majority in parliament, and maintained for upwards of twenty years.

These embarrassments of the government inevitably caused great distress among the people, and distress produced discontent and disturbance ; to allay which, the opposition, led in this instance by Mr. Grey, brought forward a motion for a large measure of parliamentary reform, in some respects resembling that proposed by Pitt a few years before ; but they were defeated, Pitt himself resisting the bill on the ground that a measure which might have been safe in times of tranquillity was fraught with danger in such a crisis as then existed, when men's minds were so violently agitated by the recent occurrences in France, and by the difficulties at home. And the supplies which Pitt required for the conduct of the war were cheerfully granted, though exceeding 40,000,000*l.*, an amount far beyond any sum that had ever yet been expended in a single year.

But the nation was reconciled to these vast demands on its re-

sources by two great naval victories. The Spaniards, being now in alliance with France, at the beginning of 1797 sent out a splendid fleet of thirty-nine sail, designed to unite with the French, who were awaiting them at Brest, and to sweep the channel of every British vessel. Sir John Jervis, who commanded the British fleet off Lisbon, had only twenty-one ships; but, on hearing of the enemy being at sea, he instantly sailed in pursuit of them, completely defeated them, took four of their largest ships, and compelled the rest to retire to Cadiz, and to abandon all hope of any junction with their new allies.

In the autumn the Dutch made a similar attempt, with even worse success. They, too, sent forth a fleet from Texel to join the Brest squadron; but were encountered by admiral Duncan, with equal numbers, and were totally defeated, with the loss of more than half their ships. Yet the very force which gained these triumphs for England proved, in the very same year, in a most dangerous state of disaffection. Since the time of James II. the navy had never been the favourite service, and the sailors had been greatly neglected. Though money had greatly altered in value, their pay had never been raised, and was now wholly unequal to their barest necessities; their provisions were bad and insufficient in quantity, and many other serious grievances gave them just cause of complaint; while the secret societies, which had of late been in fashion, taught them the method of organization to procure relief. Their plans were completely matured without the slightest suspicion of them being entertained by their officers; and, in the middle of April, the fleet at Spithead broke into open mutiny. The government behaved with generous prudence; they sent the first lord of the admiralty, lord Spencer, and lord Howe, the officer in whom the sailors had the greatest confidence, down to Portsmouth to investigate their complaints. Their justice was admitted, and they were at once redressed; but a second mutiny immediately afterwards broke out in the fleet at the Nore, when the ringleaders, though they had no longer any substantial hardships to complain of, committed the most lawless acts, even murdering some of their officers, and showed that the mainspring of their conduct was a deep-seated revolutionary spirit. Mild measures were no longer suited to such a state of affairs. The ministry behaved with great resolution, and were admirably supported by the opposition, who disdained to make a party question of the safety of the country. A severe act of parliament was passed, and preparations were made to suppress the mutiny by force. Happily, however, force proved unnecessary: the mutineers, finding that instead of awakening the sympathy, they had only excited the indignation of their countrymen, became discouraged, and dismay begat repentance; and this formidable

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conspiracy fell to pieces of itself. The ringleaders of this second mutiny, the chief of whom was a man named Parker, were executed; in little more than a fortnight from the first appearance of disturbance discipline was restored; and then, with a wise justice, the whole system of the navy was carefully revised, in order that all grounds for discontent in future might be for ever removed.

In the summer the Austrians were forced to agree to an armistice with the French, which resulted in the treaty of Campo Formio; and as this event released us from the necessity of consulting the interests of our ally, Pitt made a fresh attempt to procure peace, and conferences were opened at Lisle, whither Lord Malmesbury was again sent as the English plenipotentiary. He was empowered to make large cessions of our conquests in the West Indies, and would probably have been allowed to gratify the French pride by the abandonment by the British sovereign of the title of king of France, which had been borne by the English monarchs since Edward III., when in September the existing government in France was again overturned, and the violent Jacobins, recovering power, broke off the negotiations, and prepared to carry on the war, with the avowed intention of continuing it till they had reduced England to complete subjection.

The great statesman, who had from the first predicted the increasing violence of the French revolution, was not spared to witness this further fulfilment of his prophecies. On the 9th of July Burke died, leaving a reputation that has been constantly rising since his death, as was foreseen by Canning, who, in announcing the event to one of his friends, declared, "He is the man that will mark this age, marked as it is in itself by events, to all time." That his judgment was always correct, that it was not at times too much under the dominion of his feelings, cannot be asserted. The ground on which he maintained the justice of the war against France, namely, the murder of king Louis,* was clearly incorrect, and Pitt's views were more sound, that we had no right to interfere with the internal government of France, and that our only justifiable object in the war was the protection of ourselves from French aggression. But, with the exceptions of his thus putting our conduct in this respect on a wrong footing, and of the violence with which he led the outcry against Hastings, there is probably no practical error to be alleged against any part of his political conduct, while the beneficent virtue of his general career was so untiring that he was able to boast, with truth, that a pension, conferred on him a year or two before his death, had been earned by his having had an active, though not always an

* This, however, was not his sole ground, (see "Letters on a Regicidal Peace,") or, perhaps we may say that he gradually modified his opinion, as in these letters he argues on Pitt's ground; still the title of the letters proves his ruling idea.

ostentatious share in every one act, without exception, of undisputed constitutional utility in his time. Of his eloquence we have already spoken; we have recorded the steadiness with which it was at all times employed in the defence of liberty, whether claimed on the eastern or western shores of the Atlantic; but his speeches must themselves be studied before any idea can be formed of the wonderful treasures which they contain, of the poetical imagination that inspired them, of the profuse fancy and variety which adorned them, of the profound learning that illustrated them, and, at the same time, of the cautious, moderate, sure-footed wisdom which pervaded every part of them, tempering his more showy gifts, and keeping them under the strict control of reason and experience. We may add to this union of rare excellences the most spotless integrity, the most entire disinterestedness, and the most sincere humility in judging of his own claims; and then we may surely assert that, in spite of one or two slight errors of judgment, his whole career presents to us an union of civil wisdom, virtue and genius, of which the world has hardly furnished an equally admirable example.

The reiterated rejection of his offers of peace caused Pitt now to look upon the war as likely to be of long duration, and, consequently as one the supplies for which ought to be derived from sources different from those to which he had hitherto trusted. In accordance with these views he now greatly diminished the sum to be raised by loans, and augmented the taxes for the current year; at the same time, desirous to avoid, as far as possible, the augmentation of the regular army, he encouraged the raising of volunteer corps in every part of the kingdom, and his call was responded to with an eager patriotism which must have surprised those enemies who trusted greatly for success to a spirit of discontent, which was indeed loudly proclaimed by a few insignificant agitators, but which it was a great mistake to regard as a general disaffection pervading the whole mass of the people. In a few weeks 150,000 volunteers had enrolled themselves in different corps; in less than a year that number was doubled, and the whole island presented a scene of military enthusiasm, strongly at variance with its usual orderly habits.

But the fame of England was not yet to be won on land. The volunteers were only intended to defend the country in case of invasion; and, as we had now no allies, there was no opening for the employment of our armies on the Continent. But on the mountain waves our march became more and more irresistible. The French government indeed was most anxious to invade England, and a vast army of 150,000 men was collected on the coast of Picardy, the command of which was offered to Buonaparte; but

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as his sound military judgment pronounced success desperate, he persuaded his employers rather to send an expedition against Egypt, and, at the beginning of the summer, he left Toulon at the head of 40,000 men, convoyed by a magnificent fleet, and sailed for Alexandria. On his way he took possession of Malta, which the knights, to whom it belonged, had agreed to surrender. At the beginning of July he reached the mouths of the Nile, and at once marched into the interior of the country, while Brueys, the French admiral, took up a strong position with his fleet in the bay of Aboukir; for he knew that an English squadron was in pursuit of him, though he could not yet be aware of the genius of its commander.

About the same time that Buonaparte had arrived at Toulon, sir John Jervis, who had been made earl St. Vincent in honour of his victory, and who was still in command off Cadiz, had detached admiral Nelson with a considerable squadron to the Mediterranean. Nelson was almost the junior admiral in the service; but even before he had attained that rank he had achieved a very high reputation. He had performed important services in the West Indies. Hotham's victory in 1794 had been mainly owing to his courage and conduct; he had borne the brunt of the battle at St. Vincent, directing one of the most important operations with intuitive sagacity, and taking two out of the four vessels which were the prizes of that day; and he was now, in independent command, about to outdo all the exploits of former commanders, glorious as so many of them had been. The moment that he learnt that the French fleet had left Toulon he pursued them with the greatest energy, outstripped them, and reached Alexandria before them; passed almost close to them in a fog, which saved their army; then, obtaining fresh intelligence, he again returned to Alexandria, and, on the 1st of August, to his delight, found the bay glistening with the white sails and waving pennants of the French fleet. The Bay of Aboukir was small; the entrance was narrowed by dangerous shoals; Brueys had made a skilful use of these natural advantages, and many of his officers pronounced his position unassailable. The ships of the line were equal in number on both sides, but the English vessels were all seventy-fours, while the French flag-ship, *L'Orient*, carried 120 guns. The French, too, had several frigates; the English had only two: and there were also some formidable batteries on the shore which commanded the entrance to the harbour. But no difficulties could daunt Nelson, who, though it was late in the day before his leading ships could reach the narrow channels where the enemy lay, at once proceeded to attack them, and, sending some of his ships between them and the land, and the rest outside of them, so

as to place the greater part of their fleet between two fires, ensured the victory before a single blow was struck. It was nearly dark when the battle commenced, and the ceaseless roar and flash of the artillery were rendered more awful by the surrounding gloom, when that gloom was dispelled by a blaze that lighted up the whole bay, and it was seen that the *L'Orient* was on fire. About ten o'clock she blew up. Awe-stricken at the explosion, both fleets for a few minutes desisted from their exertions, and a dead silence reigned over the waters, only broken by the splash of falling fragments of the wreck, by the cries of the wounded, and of those who, unhurt by the explosion, were struggling for their lives amid the waves, and by the shouts of the English sailors, who, forgetful of their enmity, were striving to save them. The conflict was soon renewed, but gradually died away as the French ceased to resist. When the day broke it was found that, except two French ships which were hastening to escape, the whole of the enemy's fleet was in the power of the English. Those ships were subsequently taken, and of the whole armament only one frigate ever returned to French harbours.

But while thus triumphant abroad, England had been in great danger at home. The Irish had been for some years in a most disturbed state, and the rashness of lord Fitzwilliam, who, in 1795, had been sent to Dublin as lord-lieutenant, and who had held them out hopes which he knew to be at variance with the intentions of the English cabinet, had added feelings of disappointment and exasperation to their previous discontent. He had encouraged them to look for immediate measures of parliamentary reform and relief to the Roman Catholics, to which Pitt was not on principle adverse, but which he thought it impossible to grant with safety at such a period; and the recall of lord Fitzwilliam, which was thus rendered necessary by his own conduct, was represented by artful demagogues to the Irish people in general as an open defiance of their just claims. The secret society of United Irishmen, which had been for some time in existence, became greatly augmented in numbers, and began to entertain the boldest designs of effecting the separation of their country from England, for which purpose they did not scruple to enter into communication with the French government. The most celebrated of their leaders was lord Edward Fitzgerald, the fifth son of the duke of Leinster, a brave soldier, and a most amiable and worthy man in private life, but so deeply imbued with admiration for the principles of the French revolution, that, at a public dinner in Paris in the winter of 1792, when the French were just preparing to crown their atrocities by the murder of their unoffending sovereign, he publicly renounced his rank, called himself citizen Edward Fitzgerald, and selected as his chosen friend the infamous Thomas Paine. He was probably further

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confirmed in the unfortunate line of politics which he had adopted by his marriage with the natural daughter of the duke of Orleans ; and, in 1796, he proceeded to the Continent to arrange with French agents the details of an immediate invasion of Ireland. The French government entered eagerly into the plan ; and, in the autumn, a powerful fleet sailed from Brest, having on board general Hoche and 25,000 men. Happily for England the weather was so stormy that the expedition could not land. One or two ships were wrecked, one or two were taken by the English cruisers, and the rest returned unsuccessful and dispirited to their harbours. Still the idea was not laid aside by the Irish, though the naval defeats which the French and their allies received in 1797 disabled them from preparing any armament on a similar scale. The Irish themselves, however, had organized their strength so energetically that, at the beginning of 1798, their leaders reckoned that they had nearly 300,000 men ready to take arms in insurrection against the English government, and were holding daily meetings and uninterrupted communication with French agents, when their designs and place of meeting were betrayed to the authorities. Most of the chief leaders were arrested, and their papers were seized. Lord Edward himself escaped for a while, but was shortly afterwards taken, though the resistance he made was most desperate. He killed one of his assailants, and was wounded himself. The wound was not necessarily fatal, but, fortunately for himself, the agitation of his mind rendered it so, and he died before he could be brought to trial. His death and the seizure of his chief colleagues did not, however, prevent the outbreak of the rebellion, though it hindered it from being formidable. Fifteen thousand men did indeed venture on encountering the regular troops, sent against them by the government, on Vinegar Hill, near Wexford ; but they were easily routed. A small French force landed at Killala, in Mayo, but was soon compelled to surrender ; and a larger expedition fell in with a squadron under sir John Warren, and was captured, only two frigates escaping in safety to their own ports. A few of the ringleaders of the whole conspiracy were executed, but the rest of those implicated were treated with lenity, and the English government began to apply itself to the prevention of the recurrence of similar dangers in future by a more complete union of the two kingdoms.

CHAPTER LXV.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

THE battle of the Nile encouraged Austria to renew the struggle against France; and Russia also concluded a fresh alliance with Great Britain, by the terms of which she engaged to furnish a large army, to act in conjunction with the British forces; but the hopes thus engendered led, in the end, to no satisfactory results. At first the French, deprived of the presence of Buonaparte, who was unable to return to Europe, met with serious disasters. Nelson, with his victorious fleet, re-established the king of Naples in his dominions,* and blockaded Malta so closely, that that most important island fortress, cut off from all possibility of relief, was at last forced to surrender; while a strong expedition, sent from England to Holland, took the entire Dutch fleet without resistance, and gained one or two advantages over the French forces in that country; but the duke of York, the British commander-in-chief, a second time proved inferior in skill to the French generals, and was at last forced to purchase a safe retreat by the restoration of all his prisoners. Nor, though at first the Austrians and Russians gained some important advantages in the north of Italy, was it long before they began to quarrel with each other; and the Russians, abandoning the campaign, left the Austrians exposed to the whole weight of the French armies in the ensuing year.

Before the end of the year, however, Buonaparte had found means to return to France; and a fresh revolution in that distracted

* At the time Nelson was unjustly attacked for annulling a capitulation which one of his officers had signed without authority, and for the support which he afforded the king of Naples in inflicting capital punishment on the chief rebels, and these attacks were countenanced by Southey in his exquisite biography; but Southey, who at that time entertained opinions of extreme republicanism, was misled by the report of a worthless woman, a Miss Williams; and Nelson's entire innocence of any act of even undue severity has lately been amply shown by the authentic documents published by sir Harris Nicolas, in the Nelson Despatches. Even at the time, lord Spencer, first lord of the admiralty, and a man of extreme moderation, pronounced "that the intentions and motives by which all his (Nelson's) measures had been governed, had been as good and pure as their success had been complete;" and with respect to the case most strongly insisted on, that of Caraccioli, (who, however, was notoriously not included in the capitulation,) he was clearly convicted of the most flagrant acts of high treason, having commanded the republican gunboats which fired on a ship bearing the colours of his lawful sovereign; nor did he himself pretend to think that he had any right to pardon, but only solicited mercy on the ground of his previous services.

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country had established the consular government, in which he was raised to the office of first consul. His first step was to write a letter to George III., to propose peace; but lord Grenville, to whom, as secretary for foreign affairs, the duty of answering the letter belonged, refused to treat. The real reasons which actuated the ministry were probably those subsequently alleged in the debates which took place on the subject, namely, the unaltered spirit of aggression which animated the French, and the impossibility of placing any confidence in a nation which had established such a number of different governments in a few years as France. A still better justification of it did really exist, if we may trust the memoirs of the duchesse d'Abrantes, in Buonaparte's insincerity, as proved by his own declaration that he wished Pitt to refuse his offers, since he himself had need of war to enable him to reach the highest destinies; but even those who approved of the rejection of the French overtures, condemned the arrogant tone of lord Grenville's letter, and the want of policy and prudence which led him to base that refusal in ever so slight a degree on the delay of the French to restore their ancient line of princes.

Austria, deprived of the aid of Russia in the north of Italy, and defeated at Marengo, was forced again to make peace with France on harder terms than before; and Buonaparte thought that the subjugation of that power, (for the treaty of Luneville was not far from an admission of subjugation,) and the ill will engendered between England and Russia by the Dutch expedition, gave him an opportunity of forming a league against England, founded on the maritime laws acknowledged by all nations, but which no other people had an equal interest in enforcing.

The general maritime law of Europe, which was founded on common sense, forbade the vessels belonging to neutral powers to supply nations engaged in hostilities with supplies "contraband of war," as the phrase went; but the principle which had been contended for of late years by the Baltic powers was that any vessel belonging to a neutral kingdom had a right to carry goods of all kinds wherever it chose, without being subjected to examination by any belligerent power, even if believed or known to be employed in supplying military stores to its enemy. Russia, however, by a treaty with Great Britain, made in 1793, had abandoned these principles; but now she, Denmark, Sweden, and Prussia were persuaded by Buonaparte to unite in a confederacy to reassert them; and when, in the autumn of 1800, the British cabinet sent a strong squadron with a special ambassador to Copenhagen to expostulate, the Russian emperor, Paul, who was subject to frequent fits of insanity, seized all the British vessels, in number above 300, which were in the Russian harbours, and threw the crews into prison.

Pitt at once retaliated by laying an embargo on all vessels belonging to the members of the confederacy; and he was preparing to take more active measures, when he suddenly and unexpectedly found himself compelled to resign the government.

He had just carried the great measure of the legislative union between this island and Ireland, in spite of the most strenuous opposition from the Irish people, many of whose representatives were believed to have been bribed to support it, while many more were undoubtedly won over by the expectation which Pitt had held out to them, that it would be immediately followed by the removal of all political disabilities from the Roman Catholics. He was quite aware that the king was very averse to such a proceeding. Some years before George III. had conceived the idea that the terms of his coronation oath precluded him from giving his consent to any relaxation of the laws against the Roman Catholics, and had consulted lord Kenyon, the chief justice, and the attorney-general, sir John Scott, afterwards lord Eldon, on the point, who both advised him that the terms of the oath did not prevent him from sanctioning any measure approved of by his parliament. Indeed, common sense could have come to no other conclusion; for how could the parliament of 1689, or any other parliament, have the power to bind their successors for all time? However, the chancellor, lord Loughborough, took a different view of the question, which he urged upon his majesty so strongly, that all idea of relaxing the existing laws was laid aside for the time. But now Pitt thought that the case was altered by the passing of the union, and he again proposed it to the king as a measure which he was bound in honour to bring forward, as having gained the support of the Irish Roman Catholics for the union by a promise to that effect. George III. at once pronounced against it as a Jacobinical measure, and declaring that he would rather beg his bread from door to door than consent to it, accepted Pitt's resignation, and a new ministry was formed; Mr. Addington, the speaker, an unpretending man of very ordinary abilities, becoming the prime minister, and lord Hawkesbury, afterwards lord Liverpool, secretary of state for foreign affairs; while lord Loughborough, to whose intrigues the change in the government was principally owing, was, to his great astonishment and disappointment, deprived of the great seal, which was given to lord Eldon.

The change in the ministry, however, did not interrupt the preparations for quelling the northern confederacy; and at the beginning of March a formidable fleet sailed for the Baltic, under sir Hyde Parker, an officer of no particular distinction, with Nelson under him, as second in command. The public was surprised and indignant at his subordinate position; but, fortunately for the

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honour of England, sir Hyde had a more accurate idea of his own and Nelson's respective merits than the ministers, and left the whole management of the campaign to the victor of the Nile. On the 30th of March the British fleet forced the passage of the Sound, and arrived at Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, which the Danes had of late been indefatigable in strengthening with additional fortifications, while a powerful fleet protected the entrance to the harbour, the approach to which, even if undefended, was at all times difficult, from the narrowness of the channel and the number and intricacy of the shoals. Neither shoals nor batteries, however, could save the Danes from the genius of Nelson. It was in vain that they removed the buoys. He, in person, superintended the taking of fresh soundings, and then led the main division of the fleet to instant attack. Nothing could exceed the formidable character of the defences to be assailed, nor the gallantry of the defenders. Every point of the shore, and every one of the small islets which stud the channel, bristled with heavy batteries garrisoned with upwards of 20,000 troops, which opened a ceaseless fire on the British ships the moment that they arrived within reach of their shot. Nelson had only twelve ships of the line, and a small squadron of frigates; but his arrangements had been so skilfully made, that, though three of his ships grounded on their way, he could still attack every assailable point; and, early on the 2nd of April, his ships advanced to the positions which he had assigned them, and began the battle. For above three hours the Danes maintained an unwavering defence, though the superior skill with which our artillery was served was gradually deciding the contest. At last one of the largest of the enemy's ships blew up; others were so shattered as to be compelled to strike their colours; and in a short time more the whole of the Danish fleet and of their large floating batteries were either captured or destroyed, and most of the land defences were so greatly injured as to be incapable of protracting the contest with any hope of success. With a humanity as signal as his courage, Nelson, the moment that the victory was secured, offered terms to the conquered foe. They were gratefully accepted. An armistice was at once agreed upon; news arrived shortly afterwards of the emperor of Russia having been murdered at St. Petersburg; his son, Alexander, being eager to re-establish the alliance with England, shortly after his accession signed a treaty with the English ambassador, renouncing the system to which England had objected; and his example was followed by the other members of the confederacy, to the great indignation of Buonaparte, who pronounced their conduct to be an admission of the British sovereignty over the seas and of their own slavery.

At the same time, the French were meeting with defeat equally signal in the East. After Buonaparte quitted Egypt, Kleber for some time commanded in that country with great ability and success; but he was assassinated, and his successor, Menou, proved unequal to so great a charge. The Turkish army continued a desultory but pertinacious resistance to the French arms; and, at the end of the year 1800, the British government sent a force of 10,000 men, under sir Ralph Abercromby, to Egypt to co-operate with them; while the marquis of Wellesley, who was governing India with great energy and capacity, prepared a force to sail from Bombay, and to land at the end of the Red Sea, in order to join their countrymen in the Delta, and thus to form a combined force equal to the whole French army. At the beginning of March Abercromby landed in Aboukir Bay, and after one or two skirmishes encountered the French in a pitched battle in the neighbourhood of the great city of Alexandria. The French were beaten at every point, and compelled to retreat; and, though Abercromby himself was mortally wounded, general Hutchinson, who succeeded to the command, followed up the advantages which he had gained with equal vigour, defeating general Belliard at Cairo, and compelling him to capitulate on condition of being allowed to retire to France; then blockading Menou in Alexandria, and forcing him to submit to similar conditions, till by September, 1801, there was not a single French soldier left in Egypt.

Buonaparte proposed to counterbalance these blows to his anticipation by an invasion of England, and collected an enormous flotilla of gun-boats and transports at Boulogne to convey an army across the Channel. But the British government sent Nelson with a small squadron to watch that port, and an attack which he made on the flotilla, though it did not succeed in carrying off any of the vessels, which were found to be firmly chained both to each other and to the ground, convinced the enemy that any attempt to force a passage to our coasts was impracticable, and Buonaparte again expressed a desire to treat for peace. Negotiations were speedily set on foot, and in March, 1802, peace was definitively signed at Amiens. We agreed to restore nearly all our colonial conquests except Ceylon, and to replace the knights of St. John at Malta, while the independence of that important island was to be secured by the protection of a neutral power. France was to evacuate the Roman and Neapolitan territories, and to guarantee the integrity of Portugal, which country she had lately attacked, and from which she had extorted a large sum of money. The conditions of peace were vehemently attacked by some of the late ministry, especially by lord Grenville and Mr. Wyndham; but Pitt defended the ministry, and the approval of the peace was carried by large

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majorities. There seems reason for saying that, considering our successes in Egypt, and our uninterrupted series of naval triumphs, the concessions which we made were too great; but the people were weary of war, and Sheridan expressed the general feeling when he said that, though no one was proud of the peace, every one was glad of it.

It was not destined to be of very long duration. It was soon seen that Buonaparte's object was not permanent tranquillity, but a respite which should enable him hereafter to make war, particularly on England, with greater effect. In the autumn of 1802 he procured himself to be named consul for life, and, as he now felt assured of the stability of his power, he began to show his arbitrary and unscrupulous character to its full extent. The revolutions which he effected in Holland, in Piedmont, and in Switzerland showed an aggressive spirit which alarmed every statesman, and made even the sincerest advocates of peace doubtful of the possibility of long maintaining it. Even Fox found his love of peace overpowered by his love of justice and of liberty, and declaimed with eloquent indignation against the bad faith of the French government; and, while we were becoming suspicious of Buonaparte, he himself was becoming irritated against us. In his own country he had entirely crushed the press, and the liberty which was permitted to it with us, displayed as it was in free comments on his character and actions, was a constant source of provocation to him. He instructed his ambassador to make a formal demand that publications attacking his proceedings should be suppressed; and not only that, but that the princes of the French royal family, with a great number of their adherents, who were residing in England, should be removed from the country. To demands so inconsistent with the whole spirit of the British constitution no answer but a positive refusal could possibly be returned; but, as some of the articles in the newspapers were clearly of a libellous character, the attorney-general was ordered to prosecute the publisher of the most unjustifiable, and he was convicted.

This appeal to the law, however, was far from satisfying Buonaparte's irritable spirit; and the indications of war became so threatening that the English government decided on delaying the execution of the treaty of Amiens, as regarded the evacuation of Malta and Egypt, and declared their intention of retaining those places till France gave a satisfactory explanation of her recent conduct with regard to Holland and Switzerland. Buonaparte's anger was extreme. He declared that he would rather see the English in the possession of the Faubourg St. Antoine than of Malta; and, at a party at the Tuilleries, he attacked lord Whitworth, the English ambassador, on the subject with a vehemence which

astonished all the spectators, and which convinced every one that he was merely seeking a pretext for the immediate renewal of war. All parties in the British parliament resented the insult offered to the representative of the nation, and agreed in an augmentation of the naval and military forces ; and in May, 1803, war was formally declared.

To show his contempt for all ordinary laws and customs, Buonaparte signalized the commencement of this new war by a detention of all the English travellers whom amusement or curiosity had attracted to France. It was in vain that some of his most trusted officers remonstrated against such an unprecedented aggravation of the miseries of war. He would hear no contradiction or argument on the subject, but at once seized and imprisoned upwards of 10,000 persons, some of whom were afterwards permitted a modified degree of liberty in French towns, but the greater part of whom were kept in rigorous confinement till the end of the war. The indignation which this outrage upon individuals excited in England no doubt contributed to swell the parliamentary majority which approved of the minister's conduct ; and the events at the beginning of the next year, when Buonaparte seized the duke d'Enghien and put him to death, and assumed the title of emperor of France as Napoleon I., tended still more to unite parties in England.

He again meditated an invasion of this country, and Boulogne and the whole of the northern coast resounded with the din of the most extensive preparations. We, on our part, were not idle ; besides the regular army, which was greatly augmented, above 300,000 volunteers were enrolled ; a powerful fleet was sent to the Mediterranean under Nelson, while smaller squadrons and single cruisers covered the seas in every direction ; and taxes were voted with unexampled liberality. But as no triumphs were the immediate result of these exertions, the nation speedily became discontented with Mr. Addington, as not possessed of talents equal to the occasion. Foreign nations also, which were inclined to ally themselves with us, showed a great distrust of his capacity, and every one began to look for Pitt's return to power as indispensable to the welfare of the country. He was willing to resume office, and his own desire was to form a ministry of irresistible strength by an union with the leaders of the Whig section of the opposition ; but the king positively refused to allow Fox to be included in the new arrangement, and lord Grenville, who was jealous of Pitt's superior ability and influence with some who looked up to him as their guide, on his part declined a share in a ministry, which, at such a crisis, was formed on what he called a principle of exclusion. It is a striking corroboration of the remark previously made, how little

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Pitt, though always called a Tory, did in his system of government differ from the Whigs, and that the wide distance which now exists between the two parties has been caused by the gradual divergence of both from their original principles, that, even now, after both had been necessarily somewhat embittered against each other by twenty years of constant opposition, neither he nor Fox saw any thing to prevent their acting in concert. Such a combination, however, was positively forbidden by the king, and Pitt, in consequence, was left to bear the chief burden of government single-handed. Lord Melville, formerly Mr. Dundas, became first lord of the admiralty, and his administration of that all-important branch of the public service greatly discountenances those who maintain that the first lord of the admiralty should be a sailor, since his predecessor, earl St. Vincent, inferior only to Nelson as a naval officer, had allowed the navy to degenerate into a sad state of inefficiency, from which lord Melville's energy and ability rapidly recovered it.

The emancipation of the Roman Catholics was the question which had driven Pitt from the government three years before, and some critics have attacked him violently for his conduct on this occasion, in not only making no further mention of their claims, as if he had sacrificed them to his own lust for power, but in even resisting them when they were brought forward by Fox and lord Grenville; but the real cause of his conduct on this point was the state of the king's health. George III. had lately had two or three attacks of decided derangement, not always unaccompanied by danger to his life, and any thing which strongly agitated him was almost certain to produce a recurrence of his malady. There can be no doubt that, under these circumstances, Pitt judged wisely and properly in avoiding any thing that could lead to such a catastrophe; which was the more to be dreaded from the strange proofs of violence and indiscretion lately exhibited by the prince of Wales. He had been married some years to the princess Caroline of Brunswick, but they had been separated soon after the birth of their only child, the princess Charlotte; his quarrel with her and with the king about the education of the youthful princess had been made discreditably public; and he had further increased the king's indignation against him by publishing in the newspapers some letters which he had received from his majesty, refusing to sanction his appointment to a high military command. The prince of Wales, even by the admission of those who blame his general conduct most severely, had very considerable talents and an excellent natural disposition; but he was weak, and easily led by advisers who sought to make him a tool for their own purposes, and he had no sense of his own dignity, or of the real greatness of his position.

Pitt at once directed his attention to the formation of a confederacy against France, and his efforts were crowned with considerable success; Russia, Austria, and Sweden signed treaties of alliance with England, and with the exception of Spain, there was no great power on whose aid France could calculate in the approaching struggle. Spain, as it had done before, sought to temporize till the arrival of the galleons laden with the yearly treasures of South America; but, as the British government had certain intelligence of her hostile intentions and warlike preparations, they sent out a squadron to intercept the expected vessels, not as prizes of war, since war between the two countries was not declared, but as pledges for the continuance of Spain's peaceful conduct. To carry out such an object, it is plain that a fleet should have been sent out so strong, that the Spaniards might have submitted to what was required of them without disgrace; but four frigates only were employed on this service, a force equal in number and inferior in size to the galleons. The two squadrons met off Cadiz, in October, 1804, and the English commodore entreated the Spanish commander to submit to the peaceful detention which he was ordered to enforce. The Spaniard, of course, rejected the demand with indignation; an engagement ensued; one of the Spanish vessels blew up, the others were captured; and Spain instantly declared war against England, with but too plausible grounds for impeaching her good faith.

At the beginning of the year 1805 Napoleon again wrote to England to propose peace; but his actions were so much at variance with his professions that the latter were not listened to; and, in fact, his assumption of the crown of Italy, which took place early in the spring, and his incorporation of Genoa with France, would of themselves have been almost sufficient to excite a war, even if peace had previously existed. He began again to prepare for an invasion of England on an immense scale: 150,000 men were collected in the neighbourhood of Boulogne; nearly 4000 gun-boats and transports were prepared in the different harbours on the northern coasts of France, while, by a well-conceived set of operations, the four fleets lying in the harbours of Toulon, Ferrol, Rochefort, and Brest, were intended to unite in the British Channel, and to protect the armament in its passage to the Kentish coasts. At the end of March, Villeneuve, the admiral of the Toulon fleet, quitted that harbour, joined the Spanish fleet lying in Cadiz, and sailed for the West Indies with twenty-eight ships. Nelson had only thirteen, and those not in good condition, from having been at sea two years; but the moment that he ascertained the destination of the enemy, he pursued them, gaining rapidly on them as he tracked them from island to island, till at last, in the middle of June, he

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discovered that they had returned to Europe. He sent instant intelligence of their movements to England, and himself returned to Gibraltar, where he ascertained that they had not entered the Mediterranean; he hastened at once to Ireland, which he suspected to be their destination, found they were not there, and then, at the latter end of August, returned to England.

Villeneuve had escaped Nelson; but, before he could reach the Channel, he was encountered by sir Robert Calder, whom the admiralty, on hearing from Nelson of the departure of the French from the West Indies, had despatched with fifteen ships to cruise off Cape Finisterre, and intercept them. The combined fleets were greatly superior in number, but the British at once attacked them, and took two of the Spanish ships. Night separated the combatants; and, though the two fleets were close to one another the next morning, neither chose to renew the engagement; Villeneuve retired to Ferrol, and Calder to the Channel. It was many years since a British admiral had forborne to attack an enemy which was in sight; and though sir Robert had shown both skill and courage in the action of the preceding day, his want of energy in allowing his beaten foes to retire unmolested, caused great discontent in England, and he was severely reprimanded by a court-martial.

Villeneuve had gone from Ferrol to Cadiz, where he was closely blockaded by admiral Collingwood, Nelson's dearest friend, and second only to himself in professional skill, intrepidity, and patriotism. But as soon as Nelson had recruited his strength, which had been severely tasked by the fatigues of a two years' blockade of Toulon, and by his rapid chase of the enemy to and from the West Indies, he again sailed from Portsmouth to resume the command. It was touching afterwards, when the news of his unparalleled victory and glorious death reached the ears of his countrymen, to recollect the fond eagerness with which the whole population of the town had pressed upon his steps as he went down the street for the last time to his boat; how the windows and housetops were thronged with gazers, while the salutes which hailed the hoisting of his flag were lost amid the heartfelt cheers which proclaimed the love of the whole people for their hero, and their confidence in his success.

His arrival off Cadiz was greeted by his comrades with equal enthusiasm, but was carefully concealed from the knowledge of the enemy, whom no superiority of numbers would have tempted to sea had they believed him to be in their neighbourhood; but who, fancying that he was certainly in England, quitted Cadiz on the 19th of October, and were instantly pursued by him. On the 21st he came up with them off Cape Trafalgar. They had forty ships,

he had thirty-one ; but the victory was not in doubt for a moment. Villeneuve was a brave and skilful seaman, and, when he found battle inevitable, he prepared for the struggle with coolness and ingenuity. On land, before an action, generals have often harangued their troops with great effect, or, riding along their front, by their visible presence and gestures have animated those whom their voice could not reach ; an admiral can be heard or seen only by his own crew ; but no spirit-stirring harangue, the martial presence and dauntless bearing of no well-tried chief, ever excited such enthusiasm among his troops as Nelson's last signal, couched in a few brief, plain words, but speaking to the heart of every man in his fleet, and destined to live for ever in the recollection of every Englishman. "England expects every man to do his duty" were the words of exhortation signalled from the mast-head of the Victory, his appropriately-named flag-ship. They were received with a cheer by the whole fleet, who burned with a desire to prove that they shared the feelings of, and were not unworthy to serve under such a commander. Onwards sailed the British fleet in two columns, Nelson and Collingwood each leading one, and speedily pierced the hostile line in two places ; ship grappled with ship, and for some hours nothing was seen or heard but the dense smoke and ceaseless roar of the death-dealing artillery. As the evening approached the firing ceased ; one small squadron of the enemy was seen retreating into Cadiz, another was fleeing to the northward, the rest, nearly two-thirds of the whole combined fleet, were in our possession.

The battle of Trafalgar was over ; the combined fleets were destroyed. All idea of resistance to England at sea was banished from the minds of her enemies for ever, as an impracticable and hopeless dream ; yet the victory was dearly won, for Nelson had fallen. The tops of the French ships had been filled with riflemen, from one of whom Nelson, conspicuous among his officers by the stars of his numerous orders of knighthood sewn into the breast of his coat, received a fatal wound soon after the commencement of the battle. He died while the last guns were being fired after the flying enemy.

The history of the world can show no man so completely without a rival in his line. In other fields of glory different ages or different nations contest the palm, if not with perfect reason, at least with plausibility. Frenchmen or Italians may set up the claims of Galileo or Laplace in opposition to Bacon or Newton ; England boasts of more than one of her orators as the equals of Cicero and Demosthenes (I omit to mention the speakers of the Continent in modern times, since where there is no real freedom real eloquence can have no existence) ; while in military warfare,

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not to speak of the ancient generals, of Alexander, of Cæsar, or of Hannibal, the profoundest military critics doubt whether to assign the palm to the sleepless caution of Marlborough, to the tenacious resolution and readiness of resource amid disaster that distinguished Frederic; to the marvellous combinations, and lightning-like execution of Napoleon; or to that admirable mixture of prudence and enterprise that conducted Wellington in unbroken triumph from Lisbon to Paris; but no time, ancient or modern, no foreign country, nor even England herself, can produce any name to contest with Nelson the glory of being the greatest sailor that ever guided a ship amid the storm, or led a fleet to certain victory.

No hero was ever so beloved. Yet it is not so much to his pre-eminence in courage, in skill, and in achievements that he owes the place which he possessed in life, and which he retains after death in the affections of his countrymen, as to the heroic simplicity of his character, his feminine gentleness of heart, genuine humanity, and consideration for even the meanest of his comrades, the self-forgetful patriotism which made the promotion of the honour and safety of England the sole object of his aspirations, and the humble piety with which, even in the first moments of success, he ascribed it to the protection of God, and with which he prayed for victory, not as conducive to his own renown, but as the service due from him to his king and country. These were the qualities which made Englishmen grieve at the tidings of Trafalgar; so that one of the most acute observers of the time has recorded that every common person in the streets spoke first of his sorrow for him, and then of the victory; and which are still so fixed in the recollection of the nation, that many years afterwards, when our great military hero was taken from us, and when all tongues were vying in expressions of respect for and attachment to one who had so long filled so large a space in our eyes, his warmest panegyrists, in describing the pomp and ceremony with which his remains were laid in the grave, could find no higher praise for him, than that he was not unworthy to be laid, as he was laid, beside the still honoured and still loved dust of the mighty Nelson.

Of the confederacy formed against France England alone was successful. On the Continent Napoleon closed a short but brilliant campaign by the capture of Vienna, and a total overthrow of the Austrian and Russian armies on the field of Austerlitz, which compelled those powers to make peace. The disappointment of his hopes had a fatal effect upon Pitt. His health had been declining for some months, and the anxiety now pressing on his mind was too much for his constitution, exhausted by the incessant fatigues of official life. On the 23rd of January, 1806, he died, before he

had completed his forty-seventh year; yet, according to his physician, as completely of old age as if he had been ninety; according to his most faithful friend, Wilberforce, of a broken heart.

Even party animosity, which has seldom run higher than during many years of his administration, did not deny Pitt many of the qualities of a great statesman; and since his death his fame has been steadily on the rise, till he is now generally acknowledged as the greatest minister who has governed this kingdom. His abilities were of the very highest order. To a clearness of intellect that nothing could confuse, and a promptitude of apprehension that nothing could surprise, he added the greatest courage and firmness, and set off these great qualities with an eloquence, not as imaginative and replete with varied learning as that of Burke, nor as vehement and impassioned as that of Fox, but majestic and dignified, admirably suited to his position as the minister of a great nation, at all times singularly appropriate to its subject, and always under the dominion of the purest taste. To render these great gifts more admirable, they were ever exerted on the side of freedom and virtue, and were accompanied by the most entire disinterestedness, and the most spotless integrity.

As a financial minister he was the first who introduced into our commercial system the sound principles of freedom of trade, which, though now generally acknowledged, were at that time neither admitted nor comprehended by the generality of politicians; and the extent to which he was in advance of his age may be further seen, if we recollect that he was the first proposer of the great measures of parliamentary reform and of Roman Catholic emancipation, which have only been carried within the recollection of the present generation.

The errors which have been charged against his administration are only two, the crown prosecutions for treason in 1794, and the inefficiency of the means taken to carry on the war; for, though he was at the time vehemently attacked for allowing himself to be engaged in war at all, it is now generally conceded that war was inevitable. With respect to the prosecutions for treason, they were undoubtedly impolitic and improper; but the blame belongs not so much to the prime minister as to the law officers of the crown, who endeavoured to exaggerate into high treason charges which were only sufficient to prove sedition. That the measures adopted for the prosecution of the war upon the Continent were wanting in sufficient vigour, and that the British force employed in the Netherlands was inadequate to the magnitude of the crisis, cannot be denied; but we must recollect that no one anticipated the convulsive strength with which the revolution animated France; since even Burke, the most far-sighted of all statesmen, looked upon


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that event as the downfall of her power, as well as of her glory; and still less could any one foresee the astonishing genius of Napoleon, to whom alone it was owing that the confederacies which Pitt, with great ability, formed against France, crumbled to pieces. At the same time justice has not been done to the unbroken series of naval triumphs which distinguished his administration, and which certainly show that there was no want of energy in his war measures, when he could act unhampered by his selfish and pusillanimous allies.

In his private character he was the most amiable of men, the most light-hearted, witty, and engaging of companions; but his friends, deep as was their sorrow for their own bereavement, forgot it in the consideration of the irreparable loss to his country; and the qualities dwelt on by the most faithful of them all, who yet never flattered, and never feared to oppose him, were not his social excellences, but his unswerving regard for truth, his personal purity, his disinterestedness, his integrity, and unmixed, undying love for his country.

CHAPTER LXVI.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

HE death of Pitt broke up the ministry, and compelled the king to yield his prejudices against Fox, and he and lord Grenville combined both their parties with the adherents of Mr. Addington, who had been created lord Sidmouth, and formed a government which was hailed with great satisfaction, as embracing a more numerous body of able men than had previously been united at the same time in the service of the crown. Lord Grenville became first lord of the treasury, Fox was foreign secretary; and, besides these two chiefs, lord Howick, who shortly afterwards succeeded to his father's title of earl Grey, presided at the admiralty; Wyndham was secretary for war and for the colonies; Erskine, the greatest advocate that had ever adorned the bar, received the great seal; while the office of chancellor of the exchequer was assigned to a younger son of Fox's former antagonist, lord Shelburne, then known as lord Henry Petty, who still survives as the marquis of Lansdowne, receiving the reward of a consistent, honourable, and useful life in the cordial attachment of his numerous friends, and the sincere respect of his opponents.*

* This was written in 1859. Lord Lansdowne is since dead.

For a time the affairs of the kingdom proceeded quietly at home ; while abroad the year was signalized by our first victory gained on the continent of Europe since the war broke out. Napoleon had installed his brother Joseph as king of Naples, and the dissatisfaction evinced by the Italians in general encouraged sir John Stuart, to cross over with 5000 men from Sicily to Calabria. Regnier, the French general, commanded a force nearly one-half larger in that district, and at once advanced to attack him. The armies met at Maida, on the 6th of July, and the French were completely defeated with the loss, including prisoners, of two-thirds of their numbers. On the sea we were no less successful. Large fleets no longer ventured to leave the French harbours ; but two small squadrons, which were cruising about in order to harass our traders, were met with by admiral Duckworth and by sir Richard Strachan, and almost every ship of them was taken or destroyed.

Again negotiations were commenced with a view to peace ; but Napoleon, who had expected, from Fox's well-known attachment to that greatest of blessings, to find him eager to pay any price for its attainment, was disappointed at discovering that, though on questions of minor importance he had too often made his own ambition or the interest of his party the rule of his conduct,* where the honour and welfare of his country were at stake, he was as resolute and firm as Pitt had been. It soon became plain that Napoleon would agree to no terms which would not leave it in his power to recommence his aggressions as soon as ever he perceived a favourable opportunity. The negotiations were protracted for some time, while he kept varying his proposals as the probability of his being able to conclude a separate peace with Russia varied ; but at last it was so apparent that there was no prospect of concluding a lasting peace, that the English ministers broke off the negotiations altogether.

Before the English plenipotentiary was recalled from Paris Fox was dead. In the early part of the summer he was attacked with dropsy, and after severe suffering died on the 13th of September. During his whole life he was so short a time in office that we have not the same materials for estimating his qualities as a ruler of the nation which are afforded us by the long official career of his great rival. But, though in retrieving the affairs of the country after the American war he would have been far inferior to Pitt, since he had no taste for finance, and was wholly ignorant of political economy, and though he made a grievous mistake in his estimate of the character of the French revolution, yet in other respects his statesman-like qualities were of a very high order,

* See lord Brougham's character of him : *Statesmen of George III.*, vol. i. p. 273, last edition.

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and of the history and feelings of foreign nations, and of our relations with them, he had a thorough knowledge, and generally most just and accurate views. As an orator he was gifted with great eloquence, in which the closest reasoning was enlivened with impassioned declamation, and with the most lively wit ; and as a parliamentary debater he was confessedly unrivalled. The favourite son of an unscrupulous father, he had not been bred in a school of rigid virtue, whether personal or political, and his warmest admirers admit that his great gifts were sometimes prostituted to the most factious aims of a wounded party spirit ; but they were oftener and more earnestly employed in the cause of freedom and of peace. Of the abolition of slavery no one, save Wilberforce himself, was a more zealous advocate ; and in the cause of peace he was equally untiring, though never willing to purchase it by concessions unworthy of the honour of his country. As a man he was distinguished by the most warm-hearted and generous disposition that ever riveted the affection of friends, and disarmed the hostility of antagonists. "To be sure, he is a man made to be loved," was Burke's description of him even after his differences with him on French politics had broken off their former friendship, and that feeling still embalms his memory in the eyes of his countrymen, who remember that his faults were such as arose from education and circumstances, that his virtues were the spontaneous and enduring fruit of a most noble and magnanimous natural disposition.

His place at the foreign office was filled by lord Howick, who was succeeded at the admiralty by Mr. T. Grenville, a brother of the prime minister. But the ministry was greatly weakened both in ability and popularity by the loss of Fox. One important measure was carried at the beginning of the next year, the entire abolition of the slave-trade, in which it was now made a crime for any British subject to engage ; but their warlike measures proved singularly unfortunate in every quarter of the globe. The last exploit which signalized Pitt's administration had been the reduction of the Cape of Good Hope by sir David Baird and sir Home Popham ; and Popham, elated by success, had, without authority, crossed over to South America, and taken Buenos Ayres, from which, however, he was speedily expelled. The government, though indignant at his conduct, for which they brought him to a court-martial, yet thought it necessary to wipe away the disgrace of his failure by a fresh expedition, and sent one to the mouth of the La Plata. The first division, under sir Samuel Achmuty, took Monte Video ; and, when general Whitelocke arrived with the main body, the whole army proceeded to attack Buenos Ayres. Whitelocke showed the most utter incompetency, was defeated with great loss,

was forced to restore Monte Video and to evacuate South America, and, on his return home, was deservedly cashiered.

We were hardly more fortunate in Africa, where an expedition sent from Sicily, though it succeeded at first in occupying Rosetta and Alexandria, was at last overpowered by numbers, and was glad to purchase a safe retreat from Egypt by the abandonment of all its acquisitions; and about the same time a squadron, sent against Constantinople, where France had established a preponderating influence, equally failed in attaining its object. Sir Thomas Duckworth, who commanded the fleet, showed himself a bold and able seaman, forced the passage of the Dardanelles, and burnt several of the Turkish ships; but he proved a most unskilful negotiator, allowing the French ambassador, Sebastiani, to amuse him with pretended negotiations, till Constantinople, which might at first have been taken by surprise, was put into a state of complete defence; and then, finding the city unassailable, he was compelled to retrace his steps, which he did not do without suffering considerable damage in his ships from the enormous batteries which commanded the passage of the Dardanelles.

These events did not increase the popularity of the ministry; and, in the spring of 1807, they offended the king by introducing a bill in favour of the Roman Catholics. It was a far less comprehensive measure than that which had been proposed by Pitt in 1801, being, in fact, only a bill to enable Roman Catholics to hold commissions in the army and navy in England and Scotland, similar to one which had been passed by the Irish parliament a few years before the union. The king, however, still conceived that he was prevented by his coronation oath from consenting to such an act; and not only required the ministers to withdraw their present proposition, but to undertake never to renew it at any future time. They would not, of their own accord, have brought their bill forward now, but they thought themselves fettered in some degree by promises which they had made while in opposition; and they were entirely adverse to moving the question of the general removal of the Roman Catholic disabilities, seeing, not only that the king was unalterably resolved not to consent to it, but also that the nation in general was very unfavourable to such a step, as had been proved in 1805 by the large majorities in both houses of parliament; but they, not unnaturally, refused to pledge themselves for ever to the abandonment of a measure which they believed to be just, and might, possibly, hereafter find indispensable. On giving this refusal they were dismissed from their offices, and the duke of Portland, who, with lord Sidmouth, had been for some days busily intriguing against them, was entrusted with the task of forming a new ministry. It included no less than three

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future prime ministers, Mr. Perceval as chancellor of the exchequer, lord Hawkesbury as home secretary, and Mr. Canning, who had held a subordinate office under Pitt, whom he had impressed with the very highest idea of his abilities, as foreign secretary, while the management of the war and of the colonies was allotted to lord Castlereagh, who had already, as Irish secretary, displayed great talents for business, joined to eminent courage and firmness, though his efficiency as a leader of the house of commons was somewhat marred by an entire want of eloquence, or rather by such a confused style of speaking as often left the hearers in the dark as to his meaning, and oftener still moved them to laughter by the incongruity and absurdity of his metaphors. Lord Eldon resumed the great seal, which he held from this time for upwards of twenty years, during which he established his fame as one of the greatest lawyers that had ever presided over the administration of justice.

Though not yet a member of the government, another statesman was rapidly asserting his right to a leading place in the councils of his country. The marquis of Wellesley had lately returned from the government of India, which he had administered with great glory and with great success. Over that vast country British dominion had gone on steadily increasing. Even while in England Hastings was yearly experiencing the ingratitude of his countrymen, his worthy successor, lord Cornwallis, provoked by the ceaseless hostility of Tippoo, had attacked him, defeated him, and deprived him of half his territories; but Tippoo was rather exasperated than intimidated by his defeat, and, a few years later, being encouraged by the departure of lord Cornwallis, he proposed an alliance with the French, with the avowed object of expelling the English wholly from Hindostan. Lord Cornwallis was succeeded by sir John Shore, a man of high character, but of a disposition too pacific to deal fitly with such a turbulent band as the eastern princes; but, fortunately, before Tippoo's plans were ripe for execution, sir John had been replaced by lord Wellesley,* who at once adopted a bolder policy. Tippoo's overtures to France were a sufficient justification of the renewal of war on our part; and lord Wellesley prepared to wage it with an amplitude of means that should ensure complete success. When all was ready Tippoo's territories were invaded on both sides at once, with such powerful armies that his own did not greatly outnumber them, and the contest was not in doubt for a moment. He ventured on a battle with one division, which was easily defeated; and a few days afterwards his capital, Seringapatam, was stormed

* He was Earl of Mornington when he first went to India, but he is so much better known by his later title that it seems better to call him by it from the first.

by general Harris ; he himself was slain ; enormous treasures of every kind fell into the hands of the conquerors, and a territory of great importance, in every point of view, was added to the company's dominions. Fresh additions were soon made to them by the voluntary cession of the Nizam, and lord Wellesley found himself sufficiently powerful to be able, as has already been mentioned, to send a considerable force to Egypt, to assist in the expulsion of the French from that country.

When not at war he was indefatigable in negotiations with the native princes, by which he made acquisitions almost as large as the fruits of his victories. The nawaub of Oude ceded one large district, the ruler of the Carnatic surrendered another ; and at last the rapid growth of the British power alarmed some of the Mahrattas, a warlike tribe, the nominal sovereign of which was a prince, called the peishwah, who resided at Poonah, but who had lately been expelled from his capital by the subordinate chieftains, Holkar and Scindia. In his distress he applied to lord Wellesley for aid, who willingly agreed to reinstate him in his dominions, and sent a strong force into the Mahratta territory, under his brother, general Arthur Wellesley, who had already distinguished himself, and whose judgment and enterprise now gave some omen of the mighty exploits which he was hereafter to achieve, and by which he has immortalized the name of Wellington.

A still more powerful army was collected on the frontier of Oude, under lord Lake, and as no satisfactory explanation could be procured from Scindia, who was assisted by a third Mahratta chieftain, the rajah of Berar, lord Wellesley resolved on at once commencing hostilities against him, and at the beginning of 1803 lord Lake and general Wellesley attacked him on both frontiers of his dominions. Both generals achieved a succession of triumphs. Lake defeated an army by far more numerous than his own, commanded by a skilful French general, named Perron, and entirely officered by French officers ; stormed Allighur, one of the strongest fortresses in all India, gained a second decisive victory at Delhi, took that celebrated city, the time-honoured capital of Hindostan, and drove the French officers to submit to a capitulation, by virtue of which they returned to their own country, defeated the enemy a third time at Agra, by the final rout of Laswaree, broke the whole power of Scindia over the northern portion of his territories, and by the capture of all his military stores disabled him from giving the British any future uneasiness in that quarter.

Wellesley's success was equally decisive. He invaded the territories of the rajah of Berar, to whose aid Scindia came in person ; but fortress after fortress fell before the British general, till the allied chieftains were forced, as a last resource, to endeavour to.

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check his progress in the field of Assaye. In an open plain they felt confident of success. They had a powerful infantry, a magnificent force of 30,000 cavalry, and 100 guns, under the command of French officers. Wellesley's force did not amount in number to one-fifth of that of the enemy; and he had but seventeen guns. Nevertheless, he attacked them as boldly as if there had been no inequality in the two armies. The Indians fought splendidly; their artillery was served with great skill and accuracy; their cavalry distinguished themselves by the gallantry of their repeated charges; but all together they were no match for the invincible steadiness of the British troops, and the dauntless heart and eagle eye of the British general. No battle in India had ever been so stubbornly contested. It had begun soon after midday. It was almost night when the enemy fled in disorder, leaving 8000 men slain or wounded on the battle-field, and all their artillery as the prize of the conquerors. A second battle at Argaum was almost equally fatal to them; and, at last, Scindia and the rajah of Berar were compelled to sue for peace, and to purchase it by the cession of their most valuable territories.

At first Holkar had gained great advantages over the force opposed to him. Colonel Monson, an officer of great courage, but of little skill, lost nearly all his division in an ill-judged retreat, and all Lake's energy and matchless rapidity of operation were required to neutralize the effect of his indecision. Lake, however, was not wanting to the occasion. By a skilful division of his forces he attacked Holkar in two places at once. General Fraser routed the battalions opposed to him at Dieg. He himself almost destroyed Holkar's own division by a night attack on his camp at Furruckabad; and, though he failed in the siege of Bhurtpore, he gave him two more severe defeats, and drove him also to buy peace by concessions little inferior to those which had been extorted from his ally and father-in-law, Scindia.

Lord Wellesley returned from India in 1805, and at once took an active part in home politics, as a supporter of Pitt's policy, and afterwards of that of the duke of Portland, in whose government his brother, now sir Arthur Wellesley, was the Irish secretary. The new ministers began to prosecute warlike measures with great vigour, though not always with judgment; because Buonaparte issued a tyrannical and ridiculous edict, which (from having been signed at Berlin while he was in possession of that capital) was known as the Berlin decree, declaring the British islands in a state of blockade, and prohibiting all countries from any commercial intercourse with them; we, in retaliation, published an equally unwise order of the privy council, pronouncing the whole French coast in a state of blockade, and declaring every vessel bound for

a French port liable to capture, even though belonging to a country with which we were at peace. This order was vehemently attacked by the opposition, and plausibly defended by the ministers; but it is liable to two unanswerable objections. As against the French it was no doubt justifiable; but the misfortune was that those injured by it were not so much the French as neutral nations; and, secondly, as far as it was carried out, it injured ourselves more than any of them; since, as we were the greatest traders in the world, every measure that had a tendency to contract trade was more hurtful to us than to any other power. Fortunately both edict and order in council were, to a great extent, inoperative. Buonaparte was so little able to enforce the execution of the edict, that he violated it himself; allowing the contracts for the clothing of his troops to be taken by the British manufacturers; and, after a while, openly selling licences to authorize its violation; while we connived in an almost equal degree at the transgression of the order in council.

Another step taken by the government, however, though censured far more furiously at the time, was conceived with great judgment and courage, and executed with admirable vigour, and is now allowed to have been fully justified. The battle of Friedland had compelled Russia to make peace with France, and to a treaty concluded at Tilsit the two emperors added a number of secret articles, by one of which they agreed to require the Portuguese, the Swedes, and the Danes to close their harbours against English vessels, and to place their fleets at the disposal of the new allies. Buonaparte's object was to unite all the fleets of the world against the navy of Britain, in the hope of at last overpowering it by numbers; and the day fixed for making these requisitions was the 1st of November. These secret articles were betrayed to the English cabinet, who at once took prompt and decisive measures to neutralize them. The power of most importance was Denmark, which, having now recovered from the disaster of Copenhagen, had a splendid fleet of upwards of sixty vessels ready for sea. Without losing a day the government despatched an overpowering military and naval force to the Baltic, to demand that the Danish fleet should be surrendered, not as captured, but merely as deposited with Great Britain, and to be restored by her on the conclusion of peace. The demand was met with a positive refusal, and, in consequence, the British army, under sir A. Wellesley, attacked Copenhagen with a terrible bombardment, compelled the Danes to submit, and, at the beginning of October, the expedition returned to England with the whole Danish fleet, which, in consequence of the resistance of the city, was now considered the prize of the conquerors.

So violent a proceeding was of course laid hold of by the oppo-

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sition, who declaimed eloquently against the violation of the law of nations in thus attacking a power against whom war had not been declared. The ministers defended themselves by divulging the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit; but, as it was impossible for them to reveal the source of their information, many professed to doubt its accuracy. At a later period, after the death of their informant, the minister of the day disclosed his name; but even now Napoleon's own actions afforded a sufficient justification of the act. The day originally fixed for the demand to be made on Denmark and the other powers was the 1st of November; but his impatience for the prosecution of his designs against England was too great to allow him to wait till that time; and, on the 16th of August, the very same day that the British fleet arrived off Copenhagen, Napoleon publicly mentioned to the Danish minister at Paris that his ambassador at Copenhagen had already demanded the co-operation of Denmark, and asked whether the demand had been complied with. His rage at the discomfiture of his plans was excessive. Though he compelled Russia to declare war against England, he saw, in effect, that the chief hopes which he had founded on the northern confederacy were dissipated, and he began to plan acquisitions in another quarter to make amends for his disappointment.

CHAPTER LXVII.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

THE acquisition of paramount power in the Peninsula had, ever since the time of Louis XIV. been a favourite object of the French court; and Napoleon carried these views further than any preceding ruler of that country. He was determined to make Spain a mere dependency upon France, and to divide Portugal between the two kingdoms. The Portuguese court had been unable to resist his demand of closing their harbours against English vessels, though they had refused to confiscate the property of English residents in Portugal; and Napoleon made this refusal a pretext for invading the country, deposing the king, and announcing, in an arrogant proclamation, that the house of Braganza had ceased to reign. Marshal Junot, at the head of a French army, crossed the frontier, and marched towards Lisbon; and, hopeless of arresting his progress, the prince regent, who governed the kingdom, in the name of the queen Maria, who had long been afflicted with insanity, determined on abandoning Europe, and seeking an asylum till the return of happier times, in his Transatlantic dominions of Brazil. In November, 1807, he,

with the whole royal family of Portugal, quitted Lisbon; and a few days afterwards Junot entered that capital, and took formal possession of the whole kingdom.

Still harder was the fate of the Spanish sovereign. A large army invaded his northern provinces, seized Pampeluna by treachery, and advanced towards the capital. Charles IV., unpopular and despised, abdicated the throne in favour of his son, who, in March, 1808, was proclaimed king, by the title of Ferdinand VII., but who found himself a king without a kingdom. Murat, Napoleon's brother-in-law, occupied Madrid; but the thing which Napoleon feared was, not that the Spaniards could resist his armies, but that the king, following the example of his Portuguese neighbours, might escape from his power. To obviate this danger he directed the French admiral at Cadiz to watch the seas carefully, but trusted more to the address of Savary, whom he sent as his minister to Madrid, and who worked on the weak mind of Ferdinand, till he persuaded him to go to Bayonne to confer with Napoleon, assuring him that the French emperor would be greatly flattered by such a mark of confidence. Ferdinand crossed the frontier, and found himself a prisoner. Murat partly persuaded and partly compelled Charles VII. to take a similar step; and Napoleon, having the whole Spanish royal family in his power, deposed them, and proclaimed his brother Joseph king of Spain.

But the Spanish people had more resolution, and a higher sense of national honour than their rulers. At the news of the unworthy treatment of their princes, the populace at Madrid rose in insurrection against the French troops, and the atrocious cruelty with which Murat repressed it only excited a similar feeling in other cities. The whole country was violently excited. In some places the French were massacred; and, though Joseph was recognized by the Spanish notables, as the assembly of the principal nobles was called, which, in obedience to the mandate of Napoleon, had met at Bayonne, yet it soon became very plain that their obedience to the usurper would find no response in the heart or conduct of the nation at large.

The British government thought the rising in Spain afforded a great opening for fresh exertions on the Continent. The opposition, led on this occasion by Sheridan, showed a patriotic eagerness to support them. Ample supplies of all kinds were furnished to the Spanish patriots; and, with the view of effecting a diversion in their favour, a strong force was sent to Portugal, under sir Arthur Wellesley. In the first week of August, 1808, he landed in Mondego Bay, about half way between Oporto and Lisbon, and at once commenced active operations. His force consisted of 10,000 men; but he expected to be joined by reinforcements, under general

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Spencer and sir John Moore. He gained a slight advantage over the French at Roliça; and, having already received two additional brigades from England, marched, now at the head of 16,000 men, to meet Junot, who was advancing against him from Lisbon. On the 21st of August the two armies, of nearly equal numbers, met at Vimeiro. The English had taken up a strong position, which the French attacked with their wonted gallantry, and with full confidence of victory; but they soon found that they had to deal with an enemy such as they had not of late encountered, and the British bayonet asserted its invariable superiority. After a long and fierce struggle they were beaten in every direction, and retired, leaving 2000 men dead on the field, and 400 prisoners, and a large portion of their artillery in the hands of the conquerors.

This was the first battle in that famous peninsular contest that has crowned the military reputation of Great Britain with undying glory. Wellesley was preparing to follow up his blow, and to convert the French defeat into a complete rout, when he was arrested in his course by the orders of sir Harry Burrard, an officer senior to himself, who arrived just before the battle. He was possessed of no abilities whatever; even before the battle he had interfered to prevent some of Wellesley's projected operations, though he left the conduct of the fight itself to him; he was now alarmed at the boldness of his plans, and, in spite of sir Arthur's most urgent representations, halted the army to wait for further reinforcements. He had hardly had time to do this mischief before he was himself superseded by the arrival of sir Hew Dalrymple from Gibraltar. Sir Hew at once agreed to advance, though Junot had now had time to recover from his defeat, and to take up a strong position in front of Lisbon; but that marshal despaired of being able to maintain his hold of that city, and sent to propose a conference, with a view to his evacuation of the whole of Portugal. The generals met near Cintra, and speedily agreed to a convention, by virtue of which the whole French army was to return to France, and the Russian fleet in the harbour of Lisbon was to be conducted to England, and restored to Russia at the conclusion of peace.

The English people had conceived such hopes from the victory of Vimeiro, that they were very indignant at this treaty; and the conduct of the generals who agreed to it was made the subject of a military enquiry. They were acquitted of blame; indeed, after the mischief which had been done by sir Harry Burrard, it would seem that the terms of the convention were more favourable to us than could have been expected; and it certainly was no small advantage thus, by a single blow, to have delivered the whole kingdom of our allies from the grasp of the invader.

Shortly after the conclusion of this convention, sir John Moore

landed in the Peninsula with a large reinforcement ; and, as the other generals had returned home to abide the result of the enquiry into their conduct, assumed the chief command ; and, at the head of 30,000 men, advanced into Spain. But the wretched character of the Spanish regular armies, which was not as yet understood in England, rendered this advance useless. Napoleon, who had come himself to the Peninsula to conduct the campaign, beat them in several battles, took Madrid, and then sent an overwhelming force against Moore, who was compelled to retreat towards Galicia, in the harbours of which province he expected to find transports. The army, which had exulted in its advance, was greatly dispirited by the retreat, the weather (it was now mid-winter) became very severe, the supplies fell short, and Soult, the most skilful of Napoleon's marshals, was pressing on its rear with far superior numbers. As it proceeded towards the coast the roads became impassable, the baggage and artillery waggons were forced to be abandoned, discipline gave way under the pressure of these united distresses, and the British force diminished daily. Still Moore kept on his way, surmounting all the difficulties with unbroken resolution and admirable skill. In front of Lugo he took up a strong position and offered battle, which the French declined ; and at last, in the second week of January, he arrived at Corunna, with an army diminished to half its numbers, and prepared to embark his army. Soult, however, was not inclined to let him escape without making one effort for his destruction ; and on the afternoon of the 16th, he attacked him with great impetuosity. The British army did not exceed 14,000 men ; the French amounted to 20,000, but they were repulsed on every point of attack, and the retreat in the presence of a superior army was relieved from some of its appearance of disaster by being concluded by a decided victory. Moore himself was killed, and Baird, the second in command, was severely wounded ; but the arrangements for the embarkation were carried out by general Hope, and the army returned to England. Still the government wisely considered that, in spite of the disasters of Moore's army, the events of the last year, taken as a whole, proved the Peninsula to be the quarter most favourable to their attempts to check the increasing power of Napoleon, though those disasters were taken advantage of by the opposition to attack the ministry with great virulence, both for their past conduct and for their future plans ; the chief speakers pronouncing any attempt to withstand the power of Napoleon in that country one that could only end in defeat and disgrace. Fortunately, however, for Britain, more patriotic and more manly counsels prevailed ; and it was determined to send a fresh army to the Peninsula, and another to Holland to attack Antwerp. Unhappily, just when these opera-

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tions were in preparation, the country was deprived of the services of the duke of York, who, as commander-in-chief, by his well-judged reforms and energetic administration had greatly contributed to the improved condition of the army; but who had been made a tool by some unworthy persons who had obtained an unfortunate influence over him, and who, through his too great facility of character, had obtained the means of dispensing some of his patronage in a way that caused great scandal. His conduct was made the subject of a parliamentary enquiry, and, although fully acquitted of any corrupt motive, he found it necessary to resign his situation, though he afterwards resumed it with the general consent of all parties, when his successor, sir David Dundas, had proved wholly incompetent to discharge the duties of so important an office at so critical a time. Later in the year the ministry itself was broken up by an event scarcely less discreditable, a duel between two cabinet ministers, lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning; the blame of the quarrel was at the time chiefly attributed to the intriguing ambition of Canning, who, conscious of great abilities, desired to engross more power than belonged to his office; but in reality it was more properly imputable to the weakness of the duke of Portland, whose health had long been sinking, and who, in the hopes of saving himself trouble, prevailed on Canning, with whom he was connected by marriage, not to lay aside, but only to postpone his jealousy of his colleague. He now resigned as well as Castlereagh and Canning. The king wished to form a strong ministry by uniting the remainder of the present cabinet with the leaders of the opposition, but was met by the most peremptory refusal on the part of lord Grey and lord Grenville, who hoped by standing out to force themselves on him on their own terms, and in consequence Perceval became prime minister, lord Liverpool* war secretary, and lord Wellesley secretary for foreign affairs.

Before the reinforcements destined for the Peninsula could arrive our navy had inflicted another heavy blow on the enemy. A considerable French fleet, intended to attack our possessions in the West Indies, was lying in the Basque Roads, in front of Rochefort, and was blockaded there by a British squadron under lord Gambier. As there were no means of bringing the French to action, lord Cochrane, a captain in the navy, who had already given proofs of great skill and of the most daring valour, undertook to destroy them by fire-ships; forced his way into the harbour in spite of every obstacle that could be opposed to him; burnt some, drove others on shore, and, if he had been properly supported by the admiral, would have destroyed the whole fleet. The discontent caused by

* On the death of his father the first earl of Liverpool at the beginning of the year, lord Hawkesbury had succeeded to his earldom.

lord Gambier's inactivity was so general that he was brought to a court-martial, though, as his conduct was not imputed to cowardice, he was acquitted. Cochrane was received at home with the highest honour, and though, at a subsequent period, his unsuspicious temper making him the tool of some dishonest men, involved him in great obloquy, he was mercifully spared to see his innocence of the charges brought against him universally acknowledged, and lived to a great age, deservedly honoured as the last, and among the greatest, of that unequalled band of heroes who made Britain the mistress of the seas and the deliverer of the world.

In the middle of April, 1809, sir Arthur Wellesley landed a second time in Portugal, bringing with him 13,000 men, which raised the entire amount of our troops in that country to about 24,000. He at once marched northwards; by a most skilful movement crossed the Douro in the face of Soult's army, and compelled him to retire from Oporto so hastily that he himself sat down to the dinner which had been prepared for the French marshal. He followed up his advantage with untiring celerity, drove Soult from post to post, and compelled him to retire towards the coast of Galicia, while he himself approached the capital of Spain, filling king Joseph with such alarm that he advanced with the divisions of the two marshals, Jourdan and Victor, to check his progress. On the 26th of July the two armies met at Talavera. The French had 50,000 men; Wellesley had almost as many, but nearly two-thirds of his force were Spaniards, who were distrusted before the battle, and who, by their conduct in it, proved that no distrust could be equal to their misconduct. In artillery, also, the French had a great superiority. The battle lasted two days. On the first the French were repulsed with heavy loss; on the second they made vigorous efforts to retrieve their fortune with equal ill success. After a stubborn conflict they retired from the field, having lost many more men than the British, and leaving behind them also many of their guns and several hundred prisoners.

The news of this important victory was received with great joy by the English government, and the victorious general was raised to the peerage by the title of Wellington, which he has since made more illustrious than any other which dignifies the honoured roll of the English nobility. But he was not in a position at once to carry further the advantage which he had gained. His victory had brought around him fresh divisions of the vast French army which was occupying the different Spanish provinces. The Spaniards themselves were beaten in several encounters; after much consideration, he determined on retreating to the Portuguese frontier; and, in the autumn, he retired towards Badajoz, and took up his winter-quarters around that city.

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The expedition sent to Holland had a less fortunate issue. Antwerp was so defenceless that it would probably have been easily taken if the enterprise had been promptly executed as soon as it was decided on; but it was nearly the end of July before the expedition sailed. No such powerful armament had ever left the British shores. Above 40,000 men were conveyed to the Dutch coast by a fleet doubling in numbers any that Nelson ever had under his command, with a vast train of artillery, and amply supplied with every description of supplies and military stores. But it was soon seen that of more importance than guns and supplies, and even than the numbers and courage of the common soldiers, is the genius of the commander, and no more incapable man than the general selected to be the leader in this great enterprise ever had such a charge entrusted to him. Lord Chatham was appointed to the command, it was believed, in consequence of the personal partiality of George III. for his family; and, if this was the case, the royal preferences never took a more unfortunate direction. If an epigram of his satirists could be implicitly trusted, all the time that lord Chatham was not eating he was sleeping, and all the time that he was not sleeping he was eating; but it is not by eating or sleeping that mighty deeds are performed in war. Instead of pushing on at once to Antwerp, he sat down before Flushing. That town fell in a few days; but these few days had given time to the ever-active French (for another of Napoleon's brothers, Louis, was king of Holland, and was supported on his usurped throne by some powerful French garrisons in the principal towns); to put Antwerp in such a state of defence that, when the British army at last arrived before it, they found it unassailable. The unhealthy Dutch marshes were already spreading disease among our troops, when, in an unhappy moment, Chatham determined on withdrawing a portion of his army into the island of Walcheren, while the rest returned home. The island marshes proved more pestilential than those on the continent, and at last the whole force was recalled, though not till they had lost half of their numbers from sickness, while many even of those who survived had their constitutions permanently enfeebled by the searching character of the malady.

The Walcheren losses and the retreat to Portugal again furnished materials for the reproaches and ill-omened prophecies of the opposition, who now added to their previous predictions of woe the bitterest denunciations of the want of skill exhibited by Wellington in crowning an useless victory with an inglorious retreat; and again, more earnestly than ever, did they press the withdrawal of our armies from the Peninsula. In the mean time Wellington had learned two lessons from the last campaign, to trust nothing to the

Spaniards, and to place more confidence in the Portuguese troops, who, having been entrusted to the management of general Beresford, were speedily acquiring a steadiness of discipline which, added to their natural courage, eventually rendered them, to use the words of Wellington himself, not unworthy to combat side by side with British soldiers.

Neither the government nor the parliament were deterred by the clamours of the opposition from prosecuting the war. The parliament voted the unprecedented sum of nearly 90,000,000*l.* of money; and the ministry, trusting to Wellington's assurances of ultimate success, supplied him with the means of retaining his hold upon Portugal, to which he, with a foresight showed at the time by no other person in Europe, but amply justified by the result, looked for the eventual deliverance of the whole Peninsula from foreign domination. During the whole of the year 1810 he was compelled, by his great inferiority in numbers, to keep on the defensive, unable to prevent Massena, who was now the French commander, from taking several of the strongest fortresses in the country, and being at length forced to retreat before his advancing host. But of this retreat he had long foreseen the necessity, and he had been constructing lines of fortifications on the heights of Torres Vedras, in front of Lisbon, which should be sufficient to contain his whole army, and to bar the further advance of the enemy. But before entering them he determined to strike one blow which should raise the courage both of his Portuguese allies and of the government at home, and with this view he took up a strong position on the high ground at Busaco, and offered battle, which Massena was forced to accept, though the English commander had chosen his ground so well that, had it not been for the positive orders of Napoleon, Massena would have hesitated to attack him. He had upwards of 70,000 men; Wellington had 50,000, and of these nearly one-half were Portuguese who had never before been in action. Early on the 27th of September the French infantry, led by Ney, the most intrepid of all the French marshals, began to ascend the steep path which led to one side of the British position, while a still more numerous force attacked it on the other side. The conflict was fierce; the troops of no nation surpass the French in the vivacity of their advance, and their leaders on this important day were men of rare firmness and resource in disaster; but at length they were driven back in every direction with heavy loss, and then, with greater confidence than ever, Wellington withdrew his victorious troops within their impregnable lines to prepare, by well-earned rest, for the campaign of the ensuing year.

At the same time that these great events were taking place abroad a state of things arose at home which, for a while, threa-

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tened important changes, though in the end of it was attended with no consequences of any practical moment. The king, now seventy years of age, had lately lost his favourite daughter, the princess Amelia, and his grief preyed upon his mind so as to produce permanent insanity. The prince of Wales was appointed regent, and the opposition confidently anticipated their establishment as his ministers. Their expectations were confirmed when the prince entrusted to lord Grenville and lord Grey the office of drawing up his answer to the address of the two houses of parliament, requesting him to undertake the government of the kingdom; but from the high tone which they took about some trifling matters he perceived, or fancied he perceived that they thought him in their power; he was further alienated from them by the opinion which lord Grenville entertained of the propriety of imposing restrictions on his exercise of the royal authority, and by the favour with which both Grenville and Grey regarded the emancipation of the Roman Catholics, to which he himself was firmly opposed; and at length he decided on retaining Mr. Perceval in his office.

Before Christmas Massena had retired from Torres Vedras, as far as Santarem, where Wellington watched him with such vigilance that, in spite of his superiority in numbers, he was unable to cross the Tagus. He lay at Santarem till the beginning of March, when, hearing that Wellington had received considerable reinforcements, he broke up his camp and began to retreat rapidly towards the Spanish frontier. He had hardly commenced his march when he heard of a severe disaster which had befallen his countrymen at Barrosa, near Cadiz, where, in spite of the most disgraceful cowardice on the part of the Spanish troops, sir Thomas Graham, with less than 5000 men, had completely beaten double his numbers under Victor. Massena conducted the retreat with the most consummate skill, stained, however, with the most savage cruelty towards the natives of the country. With equal skill and with untiring energy Wellington pressed his retreating columns, cutting off stragglers, and defeating him in more than one skirmish. Close to the Spanish frontier stands the town of Almeida, which the French had taken at the end of 1810, and into which Massena had lately thrown a strong garrison. Wellington, when he reached it, immediately invested it, and Massena, eager to preserve it, turned on his steps to attack his pursuers. Around the village of Fuentes d'Onore ("the fountain of honour" is the English translation of its appropriate name) a terrible contest took place. The French nearly doubled the British in numbers, and so terrible was their onset that they nearly gained a victory, which would have been attended with the most perilous consequences to the whole of the vanquished army; but the ever-fertile skill of the British

general and the ever-dauntless courage of his troops prevented such a disaster, and after two days' stubborn fighting, carried on with equal fortune, Massena withdrew his troops, and left the beleaguered city to its fate.

The year 1811 was marked by no great advantage gained on either side. Wellington maintained his ground, though he was hampered by unexampled difficulties, owing to the impossibility of obtaining adequate supplies, especially of money, which were not, or perhaps could not be sent in sufficient quantities. Still, eager to keep up the confidence of the Portuguese, and to inspire the Spaniards with some of their courage, he crossed the Spanish border, and at the end of May laid siege to Badajoz, the strongest fortress in the province of Estremadura. Before his arrival Beresford, at the head of 30,000 British, Portuguese, and Spaniards had invested and compelled Soult to march to its relief. On the 16th of May the two armies fought the terrible battle of Albuera; in which, after both had suffered a loss unparalleled, if the number of combatants on each side be considered, the French were at last worsted, and compelled to retreat. Soon afterwards Wellington himself arrived, and, as has been said above, renewed the siege of Badajoz, but without success; such large armies were approaching from different quarters for its relief that, after a few days' firing he was compelled to endeavour to carry it by assault before they could arrive; the breaches were slight, and were defended with the most undaunted courage, and with every resource of the most inventive ingenuity by general Philipon, the governor, while the British attempted to storm them, but each time they were repulsed, and, at the end of twelve days, Wellington raised the siege, and retreated into Portugal. He soon moved northwards, again crossed the borders, in hopes to be able to surprise Ciudad Rodrigo, in Leon; but the French force, under marshal Marmont, was too strong to render it safe to make the attempt, and, after the two armies had lain for some time in the immediate neighbourhood of each other with no other result than a skirmish or two, in which the English gained the advantage, they both retired into winter-quarters.

Hitherto Wellington had maintained his ground with admirable skill and courage in spite of more difficulties than ever surrounded a British general. He was inadequately supported by the ministry; his every movement was incessantly criticized and condemned by the opposition; of his allies the Portuguese alone were trustworthy, for the Spaniards robbed his army while in safety and deserted it when in danger: still he had saved Portugal from subjugation, though he had not as yet been able to effect any thing for the deliverance of Spain. But, in the winter of 1811, he received

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considerable reinforcements, and, at the beginning of the next year, he commenced his onward course of victory which was never afterwards arrested. He had never lost sight of Ciudad Rodrigo, and, finding early in January that the French armies were at some distance from that most important fortress, he suddenly appeared with a strong force under its walls, having first distracted the attention of the enemy by a series of movements in the south of Portugal, which he entrusted to general Hill. Ciudad Rodrigo was not only a place of great strength, but it was also one of great importance, as it contained the chief stores of the French army. It was evident that its reduction must be effected with great rapidity, before Marmont could arrive to its relief; and, accordingly, Wellington pressed the siege with an energy never surpassed. On the 8th of January the British troops first arrived in sight of the place; from that day the attack was carried on with ceaseless fury; a powerful train battered the walls day and night, but the courage of the besieged did not diminish, their artillery was more numerous than that of their assailants, their ingenuity and perseverance in repairing the damage done inexhaustible. By the 19th two small breaches were made, and that night, in spite of the most fearful obstacles, they were stormed and the town was taken. Our loss was very great: two generals, Mackinnon and Crawford, were slain, and 1300 gallant soldiers were killed or wounded in that terrible assault. But the prize was of immense value, not merely on account of the prisoners, or of the vast supplies which fell into the hands of the captors, but from the evidence it gave, both to friends and foes, of the resistless energy of the British general and of his troops.

The French marshals were astonished at the brief time which Wellington had required to achieve so vast a success. Napoleon was furious, and reproached them bitterly with their want of vigour. Still greater cause for astonishment and displeasure was preparing for them: with no more delay than was necessary to put the taken fortress in a state of defence, Wellington turned to the south to repeat a similar achievement at Badajoz. With great celerity and secrecy, the battering train was transported to Estremadura, and on the 17th of March that fortress too was invested. It had proved too strong for a sudden assault in the preceding year; it was far stronger now, for Philipon had occupied the intervening time in adding to its defences in every possible manner; it was amply victualled, it was held by a dauntless garrison of 5000 men; yet speed was as indispensable to success as before, for Soult was approaching, with an army greatly superior to ours, to relieve it. On the 27th it was stormed and carried. No horrors ever surpassed those which the English regiments surmounted on that ter-

rible night. Some were crushed by vast logs and stones descending on their heads, some fell into pitfalls and were suffocated, others were drowned in the deep wide fosse which yawned beneath the breach; many fell covered with wounds, rushing, or being pushed by their comrades from behind, on beams thickly studded with sword-blades, and firmly fixed in the gaps in the walls; many were blown up by mines, many were mangled by the shells and grape which fell in ceaseless torrents among their dense ranks. The next day it was found that in that brief hour 3500 brave men had been struck down; but the town was won, and a safe path was opened for the conqueror and his army into the heart of Spain.

He proceeded to avail himself of it, though it was still a path beset with dangers of no ordinary kind. His whole army did not amount to 60,000 men, while nearly five times that number of French soldiers occupied the different provinces of the peninsula; and his comparatively scanty force was in constant want of supplies, from the treachery and corruption of the Spanish authorities, who undertook to furnish them. The common people of Spain were enthusiastic in their opposition to the French, and more so than ever when it became known that Napoleon meditated the dismemberment of their country, and the annexation of the northern provinces to France: but their leaders were the most contemptible men who ever influenced the destinies of a nation; adding to all their other bad qualities a jealousy of the English general, which made them apparently triumph in showing their disregard of his advice, and in thwarting his combinations.

In spite, however, of all difficulties, Wellington advanced into Spain, proceeding northwards in order to act upon the French lines of communication between Bayonne and Madrid. In the middle of June he reached Salamanca, with about 40,000 men, took the forts which the French had erected to command the town, and then prepared to measure himself with Marmont, who was retreating before him in order to effect a junction with other divisions, which should give him a superiority in numbers. By the first week in July the French marshal had succeeded in this object, and finding himself now in command of 45,000 men, he assumed the offensive, in the hopes of cutting Wellington off from his line of communication with the other division of his army, which was still to the southward under general Hill. Marmont was reckoned by Napoleon one of the ablest tacticians in the French army, and his manœuvres now were executed with great skill and celerity. For some days the two armies were marching in parallel lines within a very short distance of each other, while each general was watching for any mistake of his antagonist. At last, on the 21st of July, Marmont, endeavouring to increase an

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advantage which he fancied he had gained, left a gap in his battalions; Wellington, exclaiming with delight that the French were lost, was upon them in a moment. Surprised and taken at fearful disadvantage as the French were, they still fought with the most intrepid gallantry; yet never had so brave an army been so completely beaten in so short a time. It was late in the afternoon when the British attack commenced; evening had hardly begun when the French were in full retreat, with their commander severely wounded, leaving above 7000 men prisoners in the hands of the English, while the killed and wounded nearly doubled that number. Had not a Spanish regiment, to which had been entrusted a fort commanding the fords of the river Tormes, betrayed their trust, and, by evacuating their post, left the enemy an undisputed passage across that river, that whole French army would have been utterly destroyed.

The conqueror pushed on for Madrid; king Joseph retired at his approach, and the British army entered the capital of Spain amid the acclamations of the citizens, who had long been writhing under the oppression and extortion of the French, almost without hope of deliverance, and whose exultation was now proportioned to their previous despair. But Wellington could not afford to waste time in idle triumph, and soon hastened to the north to attack Burgos, the capital of Leon. It was a strong city, and he was unprovided with heavy artillery to batter the walls; but he had heard that the garrison were ill supplied with water, and that their magazines were so situated as to be easily burnt. The hopes founded on this information failed; the French generals were advancing in overpowering numbers to relieve the place, and, after a month spent in ineffectual attempts, Wellington raised the siege, and again retreated towards the Portuguese frontier. For some days the army suffered great distress from want of supplies, and its discipline, in consequence, became relaxed to a degree which provoked the most severe reproof from its general. The French pursued him with nearly double his numbers, but were unable to gain the slightest advantage over him, and at the end of November both armies went into winter-quarters.

At the same time that the British troops were reaping these laurels in the south of Europe, the country was relieved from her enemies in the north by the insatiable ambition of Napoleon, whose unprovoked aggressions now drove Sweden and Russia to make peace with England; he himself, at the head of the most enormous army ever seen, was approaching the Russian frontiers, at the same time that Wellington was advancing towards Salamanca; and when the British army was beginning to enjoy its well-earned rest on the banks of the Coa, he was hastening back

from the relics of his destroyed army, to punish a conspiracy which had nearly hurled him from his throne in his absence.

At home the ministry had been slightly changed : first, by the resignation of lord Wellesley, who was dissatisfied with what he considered the inefficient support afforded by his colleagues to his brother, and who was replaced by lord Castlereagh ; and, secondly, by the death of Mr. Perceval, who was assassinated in May by a man of the name of Bellingham. This sad event threatened to break up the ministry altogether ; as lord Wellesley, lord Moira, lord Grey, and lord Grenville were successively negotiated with by the prince Regent, who, in accordance with the wish strongly expressed by the parliament, was desirous to form a strong administration by the union of the ablest men of all parties ; but difficulties arose respecting the prosecution of the war, respecting the emancipation of the Roman Catholics, and, at last, respecting the officers of the household, till, in the end, the former ministry was re-established, with lord Liverpool at its head, Mr. Vansittart as chancellor of the exchequer, lord Bathurst secretary of state for war and the colonies ; while a rising young man, who afterwards rose to great eminence, Mr. Peel, began his official life as secretary for Ireland.

Singularly enough, the country derived benefit from the loss to the government of one of its ablest councillors ; for lord Wellesley, having now joined the opposition, changed its previous attacks on the war into reproaches of the ministry for not prosecuting it with sufficient vigour ; and the ministry, profiting by the change in their adversaries' policy, had less difficulty in procuring sufficient supplies from parliament, and sent large reinforcements to Wellington. At the same time his great achievements in the last year had induced the Spanish Cortes to appoint him commander-in-chief of their army also, so that he was in less danger than before of finding his plans counteracted by the obstinacy of the Spanish generals. He was not a man to neglect these advantages ; but, the moment that the severity of the winter was passed, he broke up from his cantonments, and, having distributed strong divisions of his combined army in different parts of the Peninsula, in May, 1813, marched with the main body, consisting of 75,000 men, towards the Pyrenees, with the expectation of thus compelling the French to evacuate Spain by possessing himself of their entire line of communication with France. So ably were his movements arranged, that the enemy were forced to make a rapid retreat, abandoning several of their strongest positions and most important fortresses without striking a blow. He pursued them with untiring rapidity ; and, at last, on the 20th of June, he overtook them in the narrow plain of Vittoria, in the province of Biscay. Joseph himself,

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with the veteran Marshal Jourdan as his lieutenant, commanded the French army, which was about equal in numbers to the British and Spanish host, each force numbering nearly 80,000 men. The French had had the choice of their position, and at length stood firm in order of battle. The next morning Wellington attacked them. It is needless for an unmilitary writer to attempt a detail of manœuvres of which he cannot appreciate the importance, and which he can hardly hope to make intelligible to his readers; and it is the more unnecessary with respect to the exploits of Wellington, because they are minutely recorded in the most eloquent history of a war ever penned, by one who himself bore an active part in many of the achievements which he relates. The battle lasted nearly the whole day. The French, as usual, fought bravely, and their artillery was greatly superior both in number and weight of metal to that of the English; but their line was forced in some parts, and turned at others, and at last the whole of their army was driven in most disorderly retreat from the field. The number who fell in both armies was not very unequal, and the prisoners were few; but the whole of the French artillery, baggage, military stores, with the treasure-chest of the army, containing above a million of money, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Jourdan even lost his marshal's baton, which Wellington sent as a trophy to the prince Regent, and received in its stead that of an English marshal, rarely bestowed, and which had never been so nobly earned before.

No such singular sight had ever been witnessed in war as was exhibited in the victorious camp that night. The French army was accompanied by great numbers of ladies, who amid the horrors of war, had indulged in every kind of fantastic luxury. Their baggage also was among the spoils; and at night there might be seen frolicking about the camp, in the exultation of their unparalleled victory, common soldiers, in various disguises, or unwonted employments. Some were arrayed in silks and satins, others had exchanged their shakos for turbans or feathers; some were playing with lapdogs, or pet monkeys, others were teaching parrots to exchange their French ejaculations for English household words of equal nationality; some were revelling in claret and champagne, and others, who, with more business-like taste, had been pillaging the money-chest, (which Wellington had abandoned to them, saying that they deserved it all), were staggering to their quarters under a vast weight of dollars, or bartering them at a most disproportionate price for more portable gold pieces.

Wellington allowed his beaten enemies no time to recover from their discomfiture. It was in vain that Napoleon sent Soult, the most skilful of all his marshals, to arrest his progress. He pressed on

to the Pyrenees, took the almost impregnable fortresses of St. Sebastian and Pampeluna, defeated Soult in more than one battle, and (in spite of the incompetency displayed by some of the subordinate English generals in Catalonia) drove him from one position after another into the Pyrenees, and by the first week in October crossed the Bidassoa, and stood, with his victorious army, the first invader of the soil of France since Napoleon had had the direction of her energies.

As the Spaniards' fear of the French diminished their jealousy of the English returned, and they again began to throw such obstacles in the way of all Wellington's designs, that he resigned his office of generalissimo of their armies, and was with difficulty prevailed upon to resume it. His letters and despatches present a lively picture of the unparalleled difficulties with which their vanity and faithlessness surrounded him, and which he only surmounted by an union of firmness, good temper, and judgment, more truly admirable than even his military genius.

Even a Pyrenean winter brought but little respite to the contending armies. The terrible state of the roads retarded the progress of the English general, who, however, went on steadily, though slowly. In vain Soult offered battle on every available spot. Defeat after defeat compelled him to retire before his conqueror. Wellington crossed the Adour, a wide and deep river, which flows into the sea beneath the walls of Bayonne, beat him again at Orthez, and, detaching a division to occupy Bourdeaux, pursued him without intermission with the rest of the army, till, by the beginning of March, 1814, he had driven him to Toulouse. So admirable was the discipline which Wellington's firmness had established in his army, that no complaints were heard of any of the natives being wronged by his soldiers in even the slightest degree; and in consequence they, contrasting the treatment which they received from the invaders with the severe exactions of Napoleon and his officers, cheerfully supplied the British camp with provisions, which their own countrymen could only procure with great difficulty.

The two armies lay in front of one another at Toulouse for nearly a month, being separated by the Garonne, which was too much swollen by floods to make it practicable to transport an army across it. In the beginning of April the waters subsided, the British army crossed the river, and on the 10th of April attacked the enemy. Wellington's forces were slightly superior in numbers; but a large division consisted of Spaniards, on whom no reliance could be placed, and Soult had the advantage of a very strong position. After a long and stubborn contest the French were beaten on every point, and compelled to retreat, and the next day to evacuate the city, which being important from its central position, would have

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rendered the victory one of great consequence in the event of any subsequent military operations.

But the war was over. Some days before the battle the allied Russian, Austrian, and Prussian army had taken Paris, Napoleon had been dethroned by a formal decree of the French senate, and, on the 11th of April, he himself had signed a treaty with the allied sovereigns at Paris, by which he exchanged the French crown for that of Elba, a small island off the coast of Tuscany. From the moment that Wellington had entered France the party among the French still attached to the Bourbons had made no secret of their hopes of a restoration. Many of the citizens of Bourdeaux had assumed the white cockade, the emblem of the exiled family; and in February the duke d'Angoulême had come in person to Wellington's camp, and had endeavoured to persuade him to declare in favour of Louis XVIII. The British general of course abstained from any such step, but saw, no doubt, with satisfaction, the feeling in favour of it among the inhabitants of the district, and reported it to his government, as affording a certain prospect of a speedy end to the war.

Lord Castlereagh, who was present with the allied armies as the British plenipotentiary, and who, by his prompt decision of character, and uniformly fearless counsels, had contributed very greatly to the success of the campaign in the north of France, was not informed of the establishment of Napoleon at Elba (which was the work of the emperor Alexander of Russia) in time to prevent it; but he protested against it, and at once predicted the mischiefs which eventually arose from so ill-advised a measure. He also abstained from interfering in the choice of the new government, which was to be established in France, wisely alleging that the only way to render the restored dynasty acceptable to the nation was to let its restoration be the nation's own work.

The return of peace was hailed with great delight in this country. The emperor of Russia, the king of Prussia, with many of the generals most distinguished in the recent campaigns, visited England, and were received with an enthusiasm which pervaded all classes, who forgot the horrors and distresses of the longest war that had desolated Europe for two centuries in the unexampled triumphs with which it had been concluded, and in their anticipation of a long enjoyment of the blessings of peace.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

NOT that England had yet obtained universal peace; on the contrary, a war was still raging in North America which had been carried on for the last two years with the United States, but which has not been mentioned hitherto, in order to avoid interrupting the narrative of the struggle against France, and also because the operations on both sides were in general of too trivial a character to excite any very deep interest.

It had been caused by the ill feeling engendered in the United States, partly by the restrictions which we had placed on the trade with neutral powers in opposition to Napoleon's Berlin decrees, and partly by the right of searching American vessels for deserters, which we claimed and exercised, often in spite of the most determined resistance. Some influence, too, must probably be attributed to the good will which the Americans had cherished for France ever since their revolution, and for their consequent sympathy with that nation in her contest with us. These grounds of difference were inflamed by one or two accidental collisions between English and American vessels; and at last, after long negotiation, in June, 1812, the Americans declared war against England. Their means of injuring us were limited to incursions on our Canadian possessions, and to attacks made by single cruisers on our frigates and mercantile marine. Their invasions of Canada, though often repeated, were productive of nothing but disaster to themselves; but in their contests on the sea they had at first better success, from the fact of their frigates being much larger than ours, and armed with guns of a much more powerful calibre. The naval war was also carried on partly on the great frontier lakes Ontario and Erie with a success which, though at times varied, on the whole inclined to the American side.

At last, when the termination of the war with France placed larger resources at the command of the English ministers, several of Wellington's best regiments were sent to America, and we prepared for more vigorous operations. One force, under general Ross, defeated a much larger army at Bladensburg, took Washing-

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ton, and, by the command of the ministers, destroyed not only the vast military stores which had been accumulated in that city, but all the public buildings, including even the senate-house and the house of representatives. Such an unprecedented aggravation of the unavoidable horrors of war is not creditable to the ministers who ordered it, and injured the cause of Britain by impelling the Americans to a most obstinate resistance in defence of other towns which were attacked. Ross himself was shortly afterwards killed in a skirmish in front of Baltimore, and his successor, colonel Brooke, found that city so strongly defended that he could not venture to assault it; while sir Edward Pakenham, who, with 6000 men ventured to attack an army of double his numbers, drawn up in defence of New Orleans under general Jackson, was repelled with considerable slaughter, he himself was slain, and the second and third general in command were severely wounded.

Negotiations for peace, however, had been going on for some time at Ghent, where the British and American plenipotentiaries had met, and in December, 1814, peace was concluded, some of the matters in dispute being referred to the arbitration of the emperor of Russia, and others, such as the right of search, passed over in discreet silence.

But peace was hardly established abroad before it was in danger of being interrupted at home by a very general feeling of discontent at the new corn-law. The price of corn had been a frequent subject of consideration in parliament, which had attempted to regulate it by different laws, some promoting the exportation of grain, and even encouraging it by a bounty; while others alternately prohibited exportation and importation, or permitted them on payment of a duty, which varied with the existing price, the object of these various enactments being to secure the corn-grower a price which should remunerate him for his labour, and to protect the corn-consumer from having to pay too much for an article of such vital necessity. Whether it was the consequence of these laws or not it may be hard to say, but for the century and a half preceding the French revolution the price of corn had been steadier than that of most articles, the supply of which depends upon the seasons; but the war had raised the price in a most exorbitant degree, and during the last year or two grain of all sorts had been far dearer than it had ever been known to be before. The people now eagerly anticipated a return to the old prices; but the government were alarmed lest so great an alteration should produce a derangement of trade, and proposed a new law, by which for the future corn was to be imported on payment of a duty varying with the existing price, but which imposed a tax amounting to an absolute prohibition of importation, till wheat rose to a price considerably above

the highest amount attained by it before 1790. The populace in general was greatly excited by a measure which they considered must at all times greatly raise the price of their most indispensable article of food. Terrible riots took place in many towns, and in London the mob attacked the house of the lord chancellor, whom they believed favourable to it, and would probably have murdered him had he not been rescued by the soldiers.

All divisions at home, however, were suddenly terminated by an event which united all hearts in the defence of the liberties of Europe. On the 1st of March Napoleon had landed in France, near Cannes, with a small body of soldiers, and at once began his march into the interior of the country, being received with great enthusiasm by the inhabitants of the mountain district through which he passed, and being joined by several bodies of troops, and by several great officers, even by some, like Ney, who had taken the command of a force sent expressly to arrest his progress, while Louis XVIII. fled from Paris to Holland, and awaited the course of events at Ghent.

The ministers of the different allied sovereigns were at Vienna arranging the different questions which had arisen on the conclusion of the war, when the news of Napoleon's invasion of France arrived in that city. They at once proclaimed him the public enemy of Europe, and arranged the proportions in which each state should provide armies to crush his enterprise. He had met with great success in raising a force which was ready for operations by the beginning of June. The allies had been equally rapid in their movements; and by the same period Blucher with a fine Prussian army, and the duke of Wellington with a force of British, Germans, and Belgians, were on the frontiers of Belgium, ready to encounter him as soon as his plan of operations could be ascertained.

On the 7th of June Napoleon left Paris, in order, to use his own expression, to measure himself with Wellington. That general had about 75,000 men under his orders, and Blucher, who was co-operating with him, had 100,000. Napoleon's army consisted of 130,000 soldiers, nearly all the tried veterans of his former campaigns. On the 15th of June he crossed the Belgian frontier near Fleurus, and the briefest and most decisive war which the history of the world records began.

It was late in the afternoon of that day that news reached the duke of Wellington at Brussels of the approach of the French emperor. He and all his chief officers were preparing to attend a ball to be given by the duchess of Richmond; and, desiring to avoid giving alarm to the citizens, he still appeared there at the head of his staff, quitting the entertainment before midnight, and

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marching at the head of his army to the threatened point of attack. Blucher, who had received intelligence of Napoleon's advance some hours earlier, had already concentrated his forces at Ligny; and Wellington now advanced with all speed to Quatre Bras, a place parallel to Blucher's position, where the four roads from Brussels, Charleroi, Namur, and Nivelles meet. On the 16th Napoleon, with the larger half of his army, fell upon Blucher, while Ney, with the rest, was sent to Quatre Bras in order to anticipate Wellington in the occupation of that important post. After a tremendous conflict, in which the Prussians exhibited the most obstinate courage, they were at last driven back with severe loss, and compelled to retreat on Wavre. The British army had better fortune, or rather was led with greater skill. But one division of the whole army had reached Quatre Bras when Ney attacked it with a force only slightly superior in numbers, but far more powerful in artillery and in cavalry, while Wellington's horse consisted chiefly of Belgians, who, as usual, ran away at the first shot: but the superiority of the French marshal availed him nothing. After a long struggle he was repelled at every point, and forced to draw off from the field of battle, though Wellington also fell back when he heard of Blucher's retreat to Wavre, and took up a fresh position in front of the small village of Waterloo, from whence he sent word to Blucher that he proposed to give battle to the French, provided he would support him with two corps of Prussians. Blucher, who, however he might be defeated, was always ready to renew the combat, promised him the aid, not of two corps only, but of his whole army.

Napoleon now, in person, took the command of the troops intended to act against the British, leaving Grouchy at the head of a division which he expected would prove sufficient to keep the Prussians in check; failing, fatally for himself, to do justice to the indomitable courage of the old Prussian marshal. Wellington conducted the retreat of his army with consummate skill, not only giving the French no opportunity of inflicting any injury upon him, but even gaining some advantage over the squadrons which, too presumptuously, pressed upon his rear. The weather was very unfavourable; heavy rains broke up the roads, and wetted the troops to the skin; but they marched on in unbroken order throughout the day; and shortly before sunset reached the line of low hills on which Wellington designed to receive the attack which he well knew would not be long delayed. In the preceding autumn, when examining the state of the fortresses on the Belgian frontier, he had been so particularly struck with the plain in front of Waterloo, as admirably suited for the position of an army, if ever it should become necessary to protect Brussels against the

advance of an enemy approaching from Paris, that he had caused our engineers to make a careful sketch of the whole ground. Military history probably affords no similar instance of strategical foresight so speedily and strikingly vindicated; for it was on the very ground which, ten months before, he had thus marked out as the most eligible field of battle, that he now took up his own position, and marshalled his regiments for the fight of the morrow.

The French did not reach their ground till later in the day; they, as well as their commander, were full of confidence, fearing nothing so much as that the British should continue their retreat during the night; and great was the exultation of both general and army when the morning light showed them their foes still in their front. "At last then," said Napoleon, "at last I have them, these English." They were the last words of boastfulness and confidence that ever passed the lips to which a long series of unparalleled triumphs had made confidence natural, and boasting itself scarcely ungraceful.

It was the 18th of June; the rain had ceased, but a heavy leaden sky overhung both armies while their leaders made their final dispositions for the battle on which the eyes of the whole world was turned, and which every circumstance combined to invest with unparalleled interest. The armies were of the first magnitude, amply supplied with all the means and appliances of warfare; the field of battle was extensive and open, affording but slight advantage to either side; the stake was the throne of France, and the tranquillity of Europe. What, perhaps, above all things attracted the minds of men, was the renown of the antagonist generals. The French chief had won his way from the humblest position to an imperial crown by his military genius; at one time or another he had subdued every nation, and taken almost every metropolis on the continent of Europe. He had not been always victorious, but, except when overpowered by numbers, he had never suffered decisive defeat; while the vastness of his combinations, the energy and rapidity of his operations, gave evidence of a genius far superior to that of the most successful of his previous adversaries. He had been driven from his throne by overpowering hosts, he had been borne back to it on the shoulders of his army, under circumstances resembling romance rather than reality, and he was now leading on the flower of that army, veterans whose fidelity and courage he had proved in many a hard-fought campaign and many a glorious victory, and who now burnt with eagerness to fix him, even though it should be at the cost of their own lives, firmly on the throne on which they had so lately placed him.

The English commander also owed his proud position solely to his own genius, proved over every description of troops in every

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variety of climate. Being a subject, fettered by the orders of his government, he had had no opportunity for such dazzling achievements as those by which the French emperor, in the absoluteness of his authority, had amazed the world; but his exploits, when fairly weighed, were such as might well be put on a par with those of his antagonist. He had conquered on the burning sands of India, on the frozen shores of the Baltic; though greatly outnumbered, he had maintained his ground for years against Napoleon's choicest troops and ablest marshals, every one of whom that was ever opposed to him had been signally defeated. He had expelled the French eagles from Portugal and from Spain; he had given them more than one bloody defeat on their own soil, and now Junot, and Victor, and Jourdan, and Massena, and Ney, and Soult, having all proved alike unequal to the contest with him, he was about to measure his skill with him whom they all acknowledged for their master.

The French army consisted of rather more than 70,000 men, and 250 guns. The English army was smaller by about 3000 men, and its artillery was little more than half as numerous as that of the enemy. But the disparity in the quality of the troops was far more considerable than that in their numbers. Napoleon's were all French; fiery, dauntless, intelligent veterans: of Wellington's force scarcely more than one-third were British, and of those British many had never yet seen a gun fired; for the flower of his peninsular army had been sent to America, and, though the war there was over, were still in that country. The remainder was made up of Germans, Hanoverians, and Brunswickers, good troops, but, by the admission of Napoleon himself, very inferior to British soldiers, and of upwards of 17,000 Belgians, who had behaved ill in every battle, and who never behaved so ill as on this day. The battle-field itself was a narrow valley between two undulating ridges of moderate height, not quite a mile apart; that on which the British line stood was strengthened on its extreme right by a small country house, called Hougoumont, surrounded by garden walls, and covered in front by an orchard and a small plantation; and to the left of the centre another defensible position was afforded by a farm-house and outbuildings, called La Haye Sainte. Napoleon's front was unbroken, save by a small roadside inn, near the centre, called La Belle Alliance.

Soon after eleven o'clock the battle began by a fierce attack of the French on Hougoumont, and in a brief space it raged with the most frightful vehemence over the whole field. Both the generals were aware that the Prussians were hastening to take a part in the conflict, and the object of each was simple: Napoleon striving to break the British centre before they could arrive; Wellington re-

solving to remain on the defensive, and to be contented with repelling the attacks launched against him, till the arrival of his allies enabled him to assume the offensive with superior numbers. Napoleon never showed more brilliant vigour and pertinacity, his troops never exhibited more impetuous and resolute courage than in the furious and ceaseless charges with which they endeavoured to pierce or turn the British position. Never did the British display more stubborn hardihood, or their chief more promptness and fertility of resource, than in repelling the furious onset of their dauntless foes. Time after time did the assailants charge up to the wood and walls of Hougomont, as often were they driven back with terrible slaughter; once a few found their way within the gates, they were slain to a man, without having been able to secure an entrance for their comrades. They even set many of the buildings on fire with their shells without moving the defenders from the remainder, or from the courtyard. La Haye Sainte was the scene of an almost equally desperate struggle; of that the French did for a short time obtain possession when the ammunition of the garrison was exhausted, but from that post they were driven again before the end of the day. Still more terribly did the battle rage where the British troops were unprotected by such defences, but in no quarter did the assailants meet with better success. Heavy columns advanced to the front of the British positions; they were overlapped by the British regiments in line; the leading files were mowed down by the fire, the centre and rear were driven back by the bayonet. The cavalry dashed up the slope; the British infantry formed squares, into which the artillerymen serving the batteries withdrew. The hedge of bayonets bristling in triple row repelled the most heroic efforts of the cuirassiers; a rolling, ceaseless fire prostrated horses and men; as they retired, the artillerymen returned to their guns, pouring their shot at deadly distance upon the baffled and dispirited foe.

Thus, for many long hours, stood the British infantry, victorious, but immovable. Occasionally the cavalry took a more active part. More than once they met an intended charge of the enemy by themselves becoming the assailants. Lord Uxbridge, the commander of the whole, led on the lifeguards and blues with crushing effect against the cuirassiers, who, despite their armour, were beaten back and trampled down by the superior energy and physical strength of the British troops. Ponsonby, with the greys, the Enniskillens, and the royal dragoons, utterly routed a far superior force opposed to him, took hundreds of prisoners, and for the whole day disabled some most formidable batteries, dying himself before he could receive any other reward of his exploit than the admiration of both armies.

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The battle had lasted nearly six hours without one advantage having been gained by the French, when the Prussians reached the field and began to operate on their flank. One hope still remained to Napoleon: his old guard, the flower of his army, the veterans who had decided many a hard-fought-contest, had been reserved for this moment; their strength was unimpaired by fatigue, their ranks were unthinned by the slaughter which had made such havoc with their comrades; they were now brought forward for a final charge and led on by Ney himself. In the most fearful of the disasters which had overwhelmed the French army on its retreat from Russia, Ney had earned from his master, never too profuse in the praise which he bestowed on others, the glorious title of "the bravest of the brave," and his soldiers were worthy of such a leader. They came on rapidly, yet steadily, as if feeling that the fate of their sovereign was in their hands. The light division poured a deadly fire into their flank, mowing down scores as they passed; but they faltered not, and pressed gallantly forward to the decisive spot. Wellington himself was there, as during the whole day he had been wherever the danger was most imminent; the British guards were lying down behind the crown of the ridge, thus seeking shelter from the ceaseless storm of the French artillery which poured upon them over the heads of the attacking columns. As the French bearskins appeared above the summit the duke himself gave the word "Stand up guards." Up sprang the grenadiers, and with one volley stretched 300 of the French in the dust; their comrades staggered, in vain their officers cheered them on; again the duke gave an order, and the conquering brigade charged the wavering and disordered enemy; then all was rout and confusion. The Imperial guard, never before conquered, threw away arms and knapsacks, and fled down the hill, pursued for some distance and slaughtered almost without resistance by the triumphant Britons.

All hope of victory was now gone from the French. The promptitude of Wellington converted their discomfiture into a rout. As the light cavalry brigade pressed the retiring guard, he perceived that the whole line of the French army was dismayed at their repulse: waving his hat, he ordered an advance of his whole force. The men, who for nearly eight hours had been opposing only a passive resistance to the endless assaults of their foes, received the command with enthusiasm. The trumpets sounded. Just at that moment the evening sun burst forth from the clouds, and the first beams that had shone during the whole day were reflected from the advancing bayonets and sabres of the British army charging down the hill in assured triumph. But few of the French resisted even for a moment. Napoleon, who had hitherto done all that genius and resolution could do, now pronounced that all was lost, and rode

from the field. By this time the Prussians had arrived in full force; the English army was too much exhausted to pursue the flying enemy; that task Blücher undertook, sending every man and horse of his whole force on their track, and completing the rout with the most unwearied energy. No defeat had ever been so complete. The whole of the artillery, ammunition, and baggage of the French, Napoleon's carriage, and all his private papers fell into the hands of the conquerors; Napoleon himself only escaping instant capture by riding all night, without stopping till he reached Charleroi. Many thousand prisoners were taken, still more deserted their colours for ever, and of the whole army that had stood so proudly on the heights of La Belle Alliance in the morning not one-third was ever collected again around their standards.

Napoleon hastened to Paris, hoping to raise another army; but his return had never been acceptable to the chief statesmen of the country, and he was forced to abdicate. He then solicited the command of the army as a general of the state, in order to repel the invaders. That was refused him; and after lingering a few days at Malmaison he retired to Rochefort, with the intention of escaping to America; but that port was so vigilantly watched by our cruisers that that scheme was found impracticable, and at last, feeling to remain at the mercy of the Bourbons, who were already re-established on the throne, he surrendered to the English captain Maitland, of the *Bellerophon*, writing a pedantic letter to the prince Regent, in which, speaking as if his placing himself in his power had been a voluntary act, he professed to expect to be allowed to fix his residence in England. The English ministers would have been traitors to the best interests of Europe had they been imposed on by so flimsy a pretence. In accordance with the unanimous opinion of all the chief powers of the allies, he was removed to the island of St. Helena, where he was allowed every liberty consistent with his safe detention. A handsome establishment was provided for him, and a considerable suite was allowed to accompany and remain with him.

His fall had been great; he did not dignify it by bearing it with magnanimity. For some years the newspapers were filled with his unmanly complaints and petty squabbles. He complained of having no higher title allowed him than that of general Buonaparte, of being attended in his rides by an English officer, and of English sentinels being placed in sight of his windows. Though the finest house in the island was allotted to him, with a sum for his maintenance which trebled that of the English governor, he complained of the inadequacy of this establishment, and the badness of the wine provided for him. He insulted the governor, sir Hudson Lowe, in the grossest manner, and then he and his parti-

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sans in England (where, strange to say, he still had some, even in the parliament) abused the governor for not always bearing his insults with equanimity. At last, after nearly six years of captivity, he died of a cancer in the stomach, the same disease that had proved fatal to his father; showing his malignity and utter want of principles and of honour in his last will, in which he bequeathed a legacy to a man, named Cantillon, avowedly because he had lately made an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Wellington.

CHAPTER LXIX.

GEORGE III. (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1815
1816



HE joy in England at the re-establishment of peace was exulting and universal, but it was shortlived. The war had produced an artificial stimulus of high prices, and the sudden fall of those prices in consequence of the change in affairs produced very general distress, and a panic, by which the distress itself was both exceeded and aggravated. Numerous measures were adopted to alleviate it, some devised by the ministers, others forced on them by the opposition; the right of the bank to pay its customers in notes instead of gold was continued for another year; taxes to a large amount were repealed, but still formidable riots broke out in many places. On one occasion the prince Regent himself was shot at on his way from parliament, and at last a committee appointed to investigate the state of affairs reported that a very extensive conspiracy to overturn the government existed in many of the chief towns of the kingdom. The habeas corpus act was suspended, severe laws against seditious meetings were passed, but what was more effectual than legislation in re-establishing tranquillity was a bountiful harvest, which removed a great deal of the distress; and by the end of the year 1817 all danger of disturbance for a time had passed away.

The same period was marked by an event of great personal interest and political importance: the death of the princess Charlotte, the only child of the prince regent, and consequently the heiress of the kingdom. She had been married, in the preceding year, to prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg; and in November, 1817, she died in her confinement. During her short life she had evinced considerable abilities, with many high and amiable qualities, and

was very generally beloved by the people at large, who lamented her death with a depth of feeling, and with an unanimity which few other events could have awakened. It seemed as if the royal family was threatened with entire extinction, for the next brother of the prince, the duke of York, was childless, and the younger dukes were all past the middle age. But in the course of the next year they all married, and in 1819 all danger of such a calamity as has been mentioned was removed, by the successive births of the prince of Cambridge, prince George of Cumberland, and our present gracious sovereign.

The peace which was now so happily established in Europe did not extend to Asia ; and Africa also, in the year after the battle of Waterloo, witnessed a great display of British power and courage on her especial element, the sea. The Algerines, always pirates, had exercised their infamous trade more vigorously than ever during the long war, keeping the inhabitants of all the coasts of the Mediterranean in ceaseless alarm ; and in May, 1816, they even ventured to assail a large party of Christians, at Bona, a town on the coast of Africa, who were celebrating the festival of the Ascension, tore down the flag from the house of the British consul, and threw the consul himself into prison. The British government determined to make this outrage a pretext for crushing them altogether, and sent sir Edward Pellew, better known by the title which he now earned of lord Exmouth, a naval officer of the very greatest skill and reputation, with a powerful fleet to rid the Mediterranean of the horde of pirates who had so long infested its waters. There was no place more strongly fortified than Algiers ; indeed, so confident was the Dey of the impregnable character of its defences, that he permitted the British ships to take their stations without opposition, in order to bring them more completely within his power. It was a fatal act of confidence : the moment that the ships reached the positions allotted to them, they opened so well-directed a fire, that some of the strongest batteries were dismounted in a few minutes. The fortifications were all made of hard stone, which crumbled beneath the iron hail, and vast breaches were soon made in every direction. The Algerines bore the slaughter inflicted on them bravely, and replied gallantly to the British fire ; a powerful flotilla of gun-boats issued from the dockyard, with the intention of carrying the British ships by boarding ; they were nearly all sunk as they approached ; but still the Mussulmans, encouraged by their creed, which promised certain salvation to all who fall in battle against Christians, protracted the fight till all further resistance had become impossible, till their fleet was destroyed, their fortifications were rendered a heap of ruins, and nearly 7000 men were slain. Though the conflict had begun soon

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after two in the afternoon, it was past seven in the evening before it was at all relaxed on either side; nor was it till the next morning, when lord Exmouth was preparing to renew the attack, that the Dey submitted to his demands; agreed to make reparation to the British consul for the insults he had received, to release all Christian prisoners in his dominions, and to renounce for ever the right to reduce Christians to slavery in future.

Equally decisive were our triumphs in India. Lord Wellesley had been succeeded by lord Cornwallis, and he by lord Minto, both of whom had tried a more pacific policy, which had rather fostered than checked the intriguing spirit of the native princes.

In 1813 the marquis of Hastings was appointed governor-general, and soon after his arrival found it necessary to adopt stronger measures of coercion towards them. After a short contest he reduced the Nepaulese to submission; but, like lord Wellesley, found the Mahrattas the most formidable enemies to the tranquillity of India. The peishwah, discontented at the engagements into which he had been forced to enter with the company, was eagerly watching for an opportunity to break them, carrying on every kind of intrigue with those who favoured his views at the different native courts, and employing every kind of means, even assassination itself, against those who opposed them. Among his most useful allies were the Pindarrees, who were bands of cavalry living mainly on plunder, in time of war usually in the service of one or other of the principal Mahratta chieftains, and even in time of peace constantly disturbing the British possessions by their lawless incursions. Lord Hastings, who was resolved to crush the Mahrattas, could not have spared the Pindarrees, even had he been disposed to do so; but, in fact, he was convinced that their subjugation was equally necessary; and he began to prepare his measures for that object with great vigour. The Pindarrees made no formal resistance, but trusted to flight. But before lord Hastings' preparations were matured, the peishwah himself struck the first blow, by attacking the British residency at Poonah. The other Mahratta chieftains made common cause with him; and against the most formidable of them, Mulhar Rao Holkar, the son of that Holkar who had been so conspicuous an actor in the first Mahratta war, the first efforts of the British army were directed, by general sir Thomas Hislop. His second in command was sir John Malcolmson, one of the ablest servants who ever obeyed the orders of the East India Company. To him the main attack upon the enemy was entrusted, when they were overtaken at Mehidpoor, a strong town on the river Sepree. A bold attack, which Malcolmson himself led with the most heroic courage, utterly routed the enemy. Holkar submitted, and was stripped of the greater part of his

A.D. 1818.

territories. Reft of his allies, the peishwah had no alternative but to copy his submission. The Pindarrees dispersed ; but the most enterprising of their chieftains, Chetoo, fled with the rajah of Berar, intending to take refuge in Asseerghur, an isolated fort of amazing strength in Scindia's territories. Chetoo himself was destroyed by a tiger. The fate of the Rajah is uncertain, though there is little doubt that he was killed in the fort, which the garrison made a gallant but vain attempt to defend, being at length forced to surrender and to submit to whatever terms the conquerors thought fit to impose ; and lord Hastings, who retained his vice-royalty till 1823, was thus enabled to employ the remaining period of his government in consolidating the British authority throughout the whole of central India.

A triumph of another and a purer kind was obtained by sir James Mackintosh, who, following in the path that had in some degree been opened by sir Samuel Romilly, obtained the consent of parliament to a revision of our criminal code, previously stained with the reproach of being the bloodiest code in Europe, and laid the foundation of new principles of legislation with regard to punishment, which have gradually prevailed, till our statute-book is now as remarkable for its humanity as it used to be odious from its severity.

The last years of this long reign were disturbed by discontents arising from difficulties which were probably in a great degree unavoidable, though they may perhaps have been aggravated by hasty legislation. The reaction consequent upon the re-establishment of peace after so long a period of war, the consequent fall of prices, the change in the financial system of the kingdom by the necessary return to cash payments, had all an inevitable tendency to create distress among the working classes. Distress bred discontent, and discontent produced sedition and disturbance. Artful demagogues availed themselves of the general feeling to excite a fresh demand for parliamentary reform, as the panacea for all the evils suffered by the people ; and political clubs were formed in many of the chief towns of the kingdom, especially in the manufacturing districts. One of the most numerous societies of the kind was established at Manchester ; and in August, 1819, it summoned a large assemblage of the people to meet at a place called St. Peter's field, in the neighbourhood of that town. The summons caused great alarm among the magistrates. It was known that large bodies of those who might be expected to attend had been practising a kind of military drill for some months ; and there was reason to fear that they might take occasion to exhibit their new science in a manner dangerous to the peace of the whole community. The magistrates endeavoured to prevent the meeting by arresting the

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intended chief spokesman, a person of the name of Hunt; and the government had previously sent down two regiments to enable them to suppress all opposition: but the vast mob, consisting of upwards of 60,000 persons, was furious at the attempt to arrest their leader. A fierce contest arose. The soldiers were called out, and order was not restored till several persons had been killed, chiefly by the pressure of the crowd, and many more severely wounded by the sabres of the hussars. Hunt was convicted of sedition, and sentenced to a long imprisonment; while, on the other hand, a large party severely condemned the conduct of the magistrates in calling in the military without, as was alleged, any sufficient provocation. The ministers, however, entirely approved of their conduct; and parliament, by very large majorities in both houses, sanctioned the views of the ministers, and passed very stringent acts to prevent such meetings for the future.

At the beginning of 1820, George III. died, in the sixtieth year of his reign. He had been so long deprived of the faculties necessary to enable him to discharge the duties of royalty, that his death might have been expected to make but little impression, as it did not appear likely to be of any political importance: but it produced a very general sensation of real sorrow among the people at large, who to their inborn reverence for his royal dignity, and to their cordial respect for his character, had learnt of late to add an affectionate sympathy for his sufferings.

And the affection with which for many years they had honoured him while alive, and with which they now mourned him when dead, was earned by some considerable talents, and by many eminent virtues. His education had been greatly neglected by his mother, so that he was not a man of great information; but he was gifted in a high degree with that plain good sense, which in the affairs of life is often of more practical value than the more showy gifts of genius. He had a thorough knowledge of the business of the state in all its departments; an acute insight into character; an affable and often lively wit in society, and at all times the faculty of expressing himself with singular clearness both in writing and speaking. His virtues were of a higher cast, and were such that the nation is not only largely indebted to them for the honour in which piety and virtue have been held since his accession, but also, very probably, for the stability of many of its institutions, amid the convulsions which were agitating the world around. It was a great thing, at a time when the agents of revolution were overturning some thrones, shaking the foundations of others, and, by dwelling on the weaknesses, or vices, or cruelties of their rulers, in every other country were loosening men's respect for the principles, the customs, and even the religion of

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their forefathers, that this land was able to point to a sovereign who, with his consort, was a pattern of every domestic virtue, and, by the personal example of religion and piety which he afforded to all his subjects, a real defender of the faith. Perhaps even his somewhat homely tastes, and a certain rusticity of manner which characterized him, strengthened the attachment to his person so deeply felt by the middle classes, who were proud that farmer George, as he was very commonly called, had the same pursuits and likings as themselves. No king since Charles II. had been personally known to so many of his subjects, none had ever taken so friendly an interest in their individual concerns. If, in the earlier years of his reign, he permitted himself to be mixed up more than became him in the intrigues of political factions, he soon shook off the evil influence, and exhibited in all his dealings with all parties the most unwavering honesty and sincerity; he was a warm and steadfast friend; and if the firmness of purpose which led him to be so did, at times, when applied to political affairs, degenerate into obstinacy, we must at least allow that this pertinacity was only exhibited on occasions when he sincerely believed the most vital interests of religion to be at stake; nor can it be denied that the events of the French revolution, where innovations, many of which were in themselves not undesirable, had gradually led to anarchy and atheism, were calculated to alarm a mind not fortified by any extensive historical knowledge, nor much inclined to the speculations of political philosophy.

This reign was the true Augustan age of England. It may be questioned whether any country in the world, during its whole history, has brought forth a greater number of illustrious men in every sphere in which true fame is acquired than adorned Great Britain in this comparatively brief period. The great statesmen, the eloquent orators, the mighty warriors have been already mentioned in the course of our narrative; and besides them, every department of literature was explored by writers of the most exquisite taste, of the most lofty and varied genius: philosophy presented hitherto unacknowledged truths, both moral and political, to the world in a dress so attractive as to produce their general recognition; and science, by some of its most marvellous discoveries, opened treasures of wealth hitherto unsuspected to the energetic industry of both the inland and the seafaring population.

I allude of course to Arkwright's invention of the spinning-jenny, to which is owing the prodigious increase of our cotton manufacture; and to Watt's discovery of the powers of steam, which has not only furnished workmen of every kind with fresh resources, aiding and promoting their ingenuity in every sphere by the most delicate or the most powerful machinery, but which, by increas-

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ing the rapidity of locomotion, has abridged the distances that formerly separated one country from another; which by thus facilitating the intercourse of the human race, has enlarged the boundaries of human knowledge; and, we may fairly hope, by increasing and tightening the different ties which bind nations to each other, may in time prove the most influential cause of peace and harmony among mankind.

At the same time Herschel, the student of a sublimer science, with telescopes of unexampled power, was opening wider regions of the heavens, filled with stars and planets previously unknown, to the gaze of mankind, and thus leading them in the most practical manner, while admiring the glories of the firmament, to ponder with increased veneration on the still more glorious attributes of the mighty Being who, by his excellent wisdom, made the heavens, and who, countless as the stars appear to our limited faculties, "tellet their numbers, and calleth them all by their names."

In the fine arts, Arne delighted the ear with the most scientific and, at the same time, the most melodious music. Reynolds in portrait, Gainsborough and Wilson in landscape, raised the reputation of the English school of painting to a deservedly high rank; while, at the end of the reign, Lawrence, Turner, and Wilkie were in the zenith of their fame, and Landseer was beginning those marvellous delineations of animals which still make his works the chief attraction of our exhibitions. As sculptors, Flaxman and Chantrey earned a renown but little inferior to that of the greatest modern artists; and, as an engineer, Brunel, the contriver of the Thames Tunnel, exhibited a skill that has never been surpassed. In architecture the labourers were numerous rather than eminent, and it was reserved for a subsequent reign, and for a great national calamity, to show that the nineteenth century could boast of an artist able to emulate at once the grandeur of Wren and the airy elegance of the Gothic and Italian masters.

If we turn to literature, Johnson's greatest works, his Dictionary and his Rambler, belong to the preceding reign; still, as he lived and wrote till the close of the American war, he may fairly be claimed for that of which we are speaking. Paley, by his eloquent exposition of the fundamental proofs of Christianity, disarmed infidelity of its choicest weapons; and Adam Smith sent forth from his closet sound lessons of political economy to enlighten the rulers of nations, and to spread riches and prosperity among the people.

The muse of history received the offerings of many most successful worshippers. Though Gibbon's apparently laboured style is too much tainted with mannerism to render it a safe model, and

though his unfortunate scepticism on the holiest subjects makes him a still more dangerous guide for the young and unreflecting, yet all must admire the dignified march of his narrative, his varied and unsurpassed powers of sarcasm and of pathos, and the boundless learning with which he adorns and illustrates every portion of his great and interesting theme. Different from, and in some respects even superior to him was his contemporary, Hume, whose "careless, inimitable beauties" awakened his most cordial admiration; and who has delineated the history of our own country with powers of description never surpassed, with the most lively wit, the most piercing acuteness, and the most intelligible good sense; which, in spite of the political bias which in some cases detracts from the perfect candour of his narrative, have won for him the undisputed palm of pre-eminence among all modern writers in his line. The easy fluency and picturesque narrative of Robertson and of Southey are appreciated by every scholar; and Napier, who, as a writer, perhaps more strictly belongs to the succeeding era, delights, not only the military reader, but those also to whom his professional disquisitions are unintelligible, by spirited descriptions of battles and sieges that could only have been prompted by the vivid personal recollection that he retained of events which he himself witnessed, and in many of which he bore an honourable share. The writings of Hallam and of Smythe, being commentaries on history rather than history itself, are perhaps less attractive than the works above alluded to, but not less instructive to those who would weigh the principles which have actuated princes and statesmen, and who would fain form a correct judgment of the motives which have influenced, or which ought to have influenced their conduct, and the destiny of the nations committed to their charge.

In classical literature Porson and Elmsley upheld the fame of British scholarship, and in the drama Sheridan surpassed the wit and humour of Congreve and of Farquhar while avoiding the indelicacy that disfigures the works of them and of the other writers of their age.

Most especially was this reign prolific of pretenders to poetic fame, the greater part of whom are already consigned to the oblivion which still more deserve, while some few have secured a partial, but apparently permanent reputation, and one or two a renown which it may confidently be predicted will last as long as the language in which they wrote. The works of Goldsmith and of Gray are few and brief, but the *Deserted Village*, and the *Elegy in a Churchyard*, speak to every heart, and find a place in every memory. Burns with true genius, and Moore with the most exquisite ear and taste, diffused an universal admiration for the

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songs of their respective countries; while Campbell with his spirit-stirring lyrics rivalled the glories of Pindar or of Horace. Chatterton in his marvellous imitations of the earlier poets displayed a degree of talent which makes one grieve that it was not under the guidance of a better regulated ambition. Coleridge exhibited powers that awake a regret that his invincible indolence prevented him from giving to the world any work worthy of his natural gifts. Cowper and Wordsworth, clothing grave lessons in a poetical dress, have secured for themselves a large class of admirers. But far above all stand Byron and Scott; the first of whom has enriched our language with the most beautiful descriptive poem ever penned, and with many works of less magnitude, but of equal beauty, painting the stormy workings of passion in the most vivid colours, though open no doubt to the criticism that he has given us no extensive or varied view of the human character, but only that which he found within the recesses of his own troubled and moody and wayward heart; open, too, to the more serious accusation, that at times he recklessly pandered to licence and immorality, and to the reproach, which in this case should be mingled with pity, that he does not always conceal the scepticism which, unhappily for himself, poisoned the springs of his life and darkened his mighty intellect. Against Scott no such reproach can be alleged. In him the most exquisite and varied genius was ever under the dominion of the purest patriotism and virtue. As a delineator of the beauties of nature he is unrivalled, and equally so when describing the chivalric courtesy of the knight, the untutored courage of the border chieftain, the rugged fidelity of the old retainer, and the sympathetic tenderness and ever-beautiful affection of woman, rising into sublimity when painting the combats both of armies and of individuals. The conflict between Roderick and Fitz-James may well stand beside that of Turnus and Æneas, and never, since the first poet told how Greeks and Trojans strove in mortal fray before the Scæan gates, have the heroic deeds of mighty warriors been sung in nobler strains than those in which the poet of Scotland has celebrated his countrymen's victory at Banuockburn, or their overthrow at Flodden.

It is, however, not only as a poet that Scott has earned the meed of imperishable renown; and perhaps the greatest glory of the whole reign, in a literary point of view, is derived from his novels, embracing every phase of life and every period of history; displaying all the beauties which adorn his poems in still more luxuriant profusion; equally powerful in the delineation of every kind of character, whether the subject be the fierce heroism of Richard, the good humour of Charles, the crafty meanness of Louis, the sturdy honesty of Dinmont, or the eccentric affection

of the faithful Dominie; still more affecting when setting before us the mingled dignity and grace of the oppressed Mary, the devotion of Jeanie Deans, or the misery of the bereaved Flora, the high-souled purity of Alice Lee, or the ill-requited devotion of the murdered wife of Leicester.

At the beginning of the present century the population had doubled since the revolution, and another million had been added to it before the end of the reign. The war with America, and still more that with France, had increased the national debt to an enormous sum; but the wealth and resources of the nation had risen in a still greater proportion, so that during the latter years of peace it supported with ease, as a permanent burden, a weight of taxation which would have been deemed intolerable for a single year even by the prodigal genius of Chatham.

CHAPTER LXX.

GEORGE IV.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Austria.</i>	A.D.	<i>Russia.</i>	A.D.	<i>Portugal.</i>	A.D.
Francis II.		Alexander.		John VI.	
		Nicholas I.	1825		
<i>France.</i>		<i>Prussia.</i>		<i>Popes.</i>	
Louis XVIII.		Fred. William III.		Pius VII.	
Charles X.	1824	<i>Spain.</i>		Leo XII.	1823
		Ferdinand VII.			

A.D.
1820.



GEORGE IV., who succeeded to the throne, was fifty-eight years of age; and, as has been before mentioned, had now for several years been discharging all the duties of the sovereign. We have now arrived at a period within the memory of the existing generation. Many of the chief actors in the events to be recorded are still among us, and we shall consequently be more brief in our narration of them, as being too recent to be regarded by either writer or reader with the impartiality befitting the historical student, or to allow the influences and motives which caused them to be fairly appreciated or correctly ascertained.

The new reign had nearly been inaugurated by the success of the most monstrous conspiracy that had alarmed the nation since the gunpowder plot, and which, like that, only failed of success

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from being being betrayed at the last moment by an accomplice. A miscreant, named Thistlewood, induced a number of desperate persons to join him in an attempt to murder the whole of the ministers, to storm the bank, to burn the city of London, and to overturn the established government. Their plans were ripe for execution when their place of meeting was surprised by the police, aided by a body of soldiers. The greater part of them were arrested. The ringleaders were tried, convicted, and executed; and, though the spirit of discontent, which had first inspired these conspirators with a hope of success, broke out in a formidable degree in several districts, and especially in the manufacturing parts of Scotland, it was speedily put down by the firmness of the ministers, and the attention of the people in general was drawn off to a more remarkable, if not more important affair.

The king had separated from his wife within a few weeks of their marriage. The latter had for some years resided at Greenwich, where she had behaved with such levity and indiscretion, that an investigation of her conduct had been rendered necessary, though the result appeared to indicate that nothing more than incautious freedom could be proved against her. Of late years, however, she had been living abroad, and her behaviour had created far greater scandal, it being generally believed that she had admitted a low-born Italian, named Bergami, to the most intimate familiarity. Influenced by this belief, the king, on his accession to the throne at the death of his father, forbade her name to be inserted as queen in the prayer for the royal family; and, indignant at this insult, though her best advisers would have counselled her to remain abroad, and to waive her claims for a fixed income suitable to her rank, she at once resolved on coming to England, and exhibiting her hatred of her husband, which could not certainly be said to have been unprovoked, by a public prosecution of her claims to share in all his new dignities.

The king was nowise backward in exhibiting the same feeling towards her, and insisted on his ministers procuring him a divorce. They saw the impolicy and danger of such a proceeding. Apart from all other considerations, it was clear that no husband whose conduct had been such as that of George IV. had ever obtained a release from an existing marriage; but at last his will overcame their resolution, and they yielded, with the single exception of Mr. Canning, the president of the board of control, who resigned his office in preference to being a party to the proceeding.

The queen landed in England in June, and proceeded at once to London, amid the acclamations of the common people, who took her part with great fervour and unanimity. Early in July lord Liverpool, the prime minister, brought forward in the house of

lords a bill to dissolve her marriage with the king, on the ground of her adultery with Bergami. The proceedings in support of the bill took the form of a trial at the bar of the house of lords, conducted by the law officers of the crown on one side, and by Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman, as the queen's attorney and solicitor-general, on her part. For a month the nation was scandalized by evidence, which, if true, proved the grossest misconduct on the part of the queen; nor, though they managed to discredit some of the foreign witnesses, could her able lawyers succeed in throwing any real doubt upon the merits of the case; but the feeling against the whole proceeding grew stronger daily. The majorities which supported the bill in the house of lords decreased rapidly; and, at last, as the third reading was carried only by a majority of nine, the ministers abandoned it altogether.

To a certain extent the queen had triumphed; but she did not live long to enjoy her victory. The next year the coronation of the king took place, and she insisted on her right to participate in that ceremony; but her claim was disallowed. In fact, upon examining the precedents, it appeared, singularly enough, that though most preceding queens had been crowned, there had not been above one or two since the conquest who had been crowned at the same time with their husbands. She then attempted to force her way into Westminster Abbey on the day of the ceremony, in the hope of creating some disturbance, but was refused admittance; and the mortification she experienced, acting upon her always excitable feelings, produced an illness, of which she died at the beginning of August, 1821. Her body, by her own desire, was removed to Brunswick for burial.

Even before her death she had in a great measure lost her popularity, and the king had risen in the regard of the nation. He improved that feeling by paying visits to Ireland and Scotland, neither of which countries he had ever seen, and in both of which he was received with unbounded enthusiasm, and gained golden opinions from all classes by his affability and by the graces of manner in which no prince ever surpassed him.

In the autumn of 1822 the ministry lost one of its ablest members by the death of lord Castlereagh, whose health had given way under the constant pressure of business in his most laborious office, and who, in a fit of temporary delirium, put an end to his own existence. Great in every thing but eloquence, he found a worthy successor in Canning, whose chief reputation, however, was founded on his excellence in that very qualification in which Castlereagh failed. He, too, was a statesman of large views and brilliant genius, and he had greatly raised his character by abandoning office at the time of the proceedings against the queen; he had just been appointed

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governor-general of India, and was on the point of proceeding to that country when Castlereagh died ; he now took the seals of the foreign office, and the lead in the house of commons, and was universally looked up to as the presiding genius of the ministry during the rest of his life. Another alteration had lately taken place in the cabinet, lord Sidmouth, now an old man, having relinquished the post of home secretary, and having been succeeded by Mr. Peel ; while at the same time lord Wellesley became lord-lieutenant of Ireland, which was in a condition eminently requiring the hand of a firm and able ruler.

For that country was again under the pressure of severe and general distress, arising in a great degree from the improvident manner in which the land had been subdivided among small holders. Distress, as usual, produced disturbance ; and the competition for even the smallest portions of land gave rise to fearful crimes, to outrages of every kind, incendiarism, and assassination. By an admirable mixture of conciliation and firmness lord Wellesley succeeded in some degree in allaying the spirit of disaffection ; but the ill feeling was rather stifled than eradicated ; and it is only within the last few years that the cause of the evil has been to some extent removed, partly by the extensive emigration which has taken place, and partly by the introduction of English capital into the country, through the gradual operation of the encumbered estates' act ; so that we may be allowed to hope there is at length dawning upon that long-vexed land a fortune more worthy of the many advantages of the country itself, and of the courage and genius of its people.

At the same time the preservation of the peace of Europe was greatly endangered. In Spain the people had risen in rebellion against their sovereign, and affairs had assumed so ominous an aspect, that a congress of ministers of the principal European powers to decide on the conduct to be adopted by them with reference to the state of that country was held at Verona, in the north of Italy, which was attended by the duke of Wellington as the British plenipotentiary. Lord Castlereagh, in one of the last state papers which he drew up, had pronounced his decision in favour of the absolute non-intervention of England ; and his line of policy was carried out with great firmness by his successor. The French government, however, could not be induced to adopt the same course ; but, thinking that the throne of Louis XVIII. might be imperilled by the success of the revolutionary party in Spain, they sent into that country a powerful army, under the duke d'Angoulême, which speedily put down all opposition, and re-established king Ferdinand in his pristine authority. The ascendancy thus acquired by France over the Spanish councils gave Canning more anxiety

than even the previous disturbed state of Spain herself. It endangered, as he conceived, the balance of power in a most formidable degree; and, with a view to diminish French influence by at least preventing its extension to America, he recognized the independence of the states in South America, which had lately thrown off the dominion of Spain, and, by formal treaties, established commercial relations with them, from which great advantages to British interests were confidently expected.

In these instances he preserved peace by abstinence from all intervention. Two years later he maintained it by the most energetic interference. In 1823 Portugal had caught the flame of insurrection from Spain; and, though for a time tranquillity had been re-established, the seeds of a rebellious spirit remained alive in that country, and were fostered by Spain, who allowed bands of Portuguese rebels to be armed and trained on the Spanish side of the border, from whence from time to time they made incursions into Portugal, with the avowed design of overthrowing the Portuguese government. At last, in November, 1826, that government made a formal application to England for aid against their insurrectionary attempts. It was promptly afforded: 6000 men were instantly sent to Lisbon. Their employment was justified by Mr. Canning to the house of commons in one of the most successful efforts of his eloquence. The measure proved completely successful. The presence of the soldiers awed the rebels into inaction, prevented Spain and France from giving them any further countenance, and after a few months the troops returned to England.

While these events were taking place on the Continent, at home the ministers (acting chiefly under the influence of Mr. Huskisson, a pupil of Pitt, and an intimate friend of Canning) were taking active measures by the relaxation of our navigation laws, and of other restrictive enactments, to extend our trade in every quarter of the globe; and, though their policy in this respect was, in 1825, interrupted by a crisis, which, in consequence of a rapid and unprecedented drain of bullion, threatened for a moment even the Bank of England with bankruptcy, the principles then established have been gradually extended in their operation, till freedom of trade has become the rule, and restriction the exception, in the general commercial system of the country.

The year 1827 was fraught with many events of melancholy importance. In January the duke of York died; and, as he had always been a most resolute supporter of the law by which the Roman Catholics were excluded from Parliament, the party anxious to maintain it regarded his death with a degree of concern which was largely mingled with apprehension. The next month they experienced another loss in lord Liverpool, who was attacked

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with paralysis in a manner which prevented the possibility of his continuing in office. Though not a man of commanding genius, he had been a prudent, an upright, and a most successful minister; and, from the general respect in which he was held, he had shown himself eminently fitted to preserve harmonious action in a cabinet divided on what had been for some time considered the most important question of the day, that of the emancipation of the Roman Catholics.

He was succeeded at the treasury by Mr. Canning, who found, however, more difficulty than he had anticipated in forming a ministry, from the circumstance of all those of his previous colleagues who were adverse to the claims of the Roman Catholics at once resigning their offices. The concession of those claims was still to be left an open question in the cabinet, as it had been in lord Liverpool's time; but the duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel alleged that the conceding party would gain too much strength, from the fact of the prime minister belonging to it, for them to form a part in his government; and the chancellor, lord Eldon, who had for some time felt the infirmities of age creeping upon him, was glad, from personal motives, to retire from a post of such incessant labour as that which he had now held for nearly a quarter of a century, with a reputation for a profound knowledge of every branch of the law, for the strictest honesty and uprightness in the discharge of his duties, and for uniform courtesy and urbanity towards all who were brought in contact with him, which had not been exceeded, perhaps it may be said, had not been equalled, by the greatest of his predecessors. His successor was sir John Copley, who, as solicitor-general at the time of the queen's trial, had shown the most brilliant abilities, which, as lord Lyndhurst, he was henceforth to display to greater perfection in a higher sphere. Lord Dudley succeeded Canning himself at the foreign office. Mr. Robinson, the chancellor of the exchequer, became lord Goderich and colonial secretary; and, after a few weeks, lord Lansdowne, one of the chief members of the Whig party, consented to occupy Peel's place at the home office.

The attention of parliament was taken up mainly by attacks upon the new government, which, however, soon appeared to be well supported in both houses of parliament, and people in general were looking forward with eagerness not unmingled with curiosity to its future measures, when their anticipations were suddenly terminated by Canning's death. In the middle of July he caught a violent cold, which brought on severe inflammation. He was removed to the duke of Devonshire's villa at Chiswick; but neither change of air nor medical skill could avail, and, on the 8th of August, he expired in the very same room in which Fox had died

a few years before. He was a man of the most brilliant genius in every department of statesmanship; by far the first orator in the British parliament, uniting the firmest attachment to the constitution with the most enlightened desire for improvement; and his death at this juncture was one of the most severe calamities which could have befallen the nation.

Lord Goderich now became prime minister, and was succeeded in the colonial office by Mr. Huskisson. The duration of this new cabinet was scarcely longer than that of Canning's, and was distinguished by only one event, with the origin of which it had, however, nothing to do, since it was the consequence of measures of the preceding ministry. Some years previously the Greeks had risen in insurrection against the Turkish government, and had proclaimed their own independence as a nation. One of the fiercest civil wars recorded in history immediately began, distinguished by acts of fearful atrocity on both sides. Gradually, however, the Greeks gained the advantage, until success, as is often the case, introduced divisions into their councils. In the mean time their struggles for freedom had awakened the greatest interest in England, and had procured them some important assistance. Among others lord Byron espoused their cause, and repaired to Missolonghi, a strong town on the gulf of Lepanto, in the marshes around which he caught the fever of which he died in the spring of 1824; and lord Cochrane brought the more valuable aid of his approved courage and skill as a naval commander. In the hope of securing the protection of the English government the Greeks even offered the sovereignty of their country to prince Leopold; but it was not judged prudent to awaken the jealousy of the other powers which were interested in the independence of Greece by countenancing the assumption of that dignity by one so closely related to England as the widowed husband of the princess Charlotte, and it was considered better to place Greece under the joint protection of England, France, and Russia. Accordingly one of Canning's last acts had been the conclusion of a treaty between these three powers, by which they proposed to compel the sultan to surrender all but a nominal sovereignty over Greece on condition of receiving a fixed annual tribute from that country of such an amount as should cause him no diminution of his previous revenue. The sultan rejected the proposal with indignation, on which a powerful English, French, and Russian fleet was sent to the coast of Greece to defend the Greeks by force, if need should arise, from the vigorous efforts which the Turks were preparing to make for their subjugation. Ibrahim Pacha, the most skilful and daring of the Turkish officers, lay with a powerful fleet in the Bay of Navarino (celebrated in ancient times under the name of Pylos as the scene

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of the heaviest blow inflicted by Athens upon Sparta in the Peloponnesian war). He had also under his command a considerable land force, which was committing fearful ravages in the Morea, and treating the inhabitants with the most atrocious cruelty. The commanders of the allied fleet, the chief of whom was the English admiral, sir Edward Codrington, in vain required him to desist from his cruelties, while negotiations were going on to induce his sovereign to agree to the terms which had been proposed to him; and, on his refusal, on the 20th of October they attacked his fleet, and, without much difficulty, entirely destroyed it. Still the sultan refused to yield; but his power over the Greeks was gone forever, and, at the beginning of 1828, count Capo d'Istria, who had throughout borne a prominent part as one of the chiefs of the insurrection, was elected president of Greece, and began to exercise undisputed authority under that title.

While affairs were going on thus in Europe, in Asia our Indian empire was steadily advancing on both sides. On the eastern frontier the incursions of the Burmese on our Bengal dominions had compelled the governor-general to send a strong force, under sir Archibald Campbell, to chastise them by attacking, not the district which lay nearest to Calcutta, on which our blows, if dealt at all, were expected to fall, but their chief port of Rangoon, at the most southern part of their territory. The king of Burmah was a powerful and martial prince, and his metropolis, Ava, though built chiefly of wood, was a large and wealthy city; his subjects were numerous and warlike, and so little did he dread an encounter with our scanty numbers that he boasted that the English troops would be unable even to prevent his cooks from boiling their rice. When he was undeceived by a severe defeat which his army received in the open field, and when he found that even the dense and swampy jungles, in which his country abounded, could not arrest the progress of the British soldiers, he had recourse to the system of desolating his territories himself, to prevent their affording supplies or means of transport to the invaders.

He was only deferring, not averting his subjugation. The British troops, having received some strong reinforcements, advanced steadily inland. Once or twice the enemy endeavoured to make a stand behind stockades erected with much military skill in favourable positions, but they were invariably driven from these fortifications with great slaughter. The king sent his own brothers to conduct the war, with his chosen corps, called the Invulnerables, men who looked as like pieces of furniture as warriors, being most beautifully tattooed in various colours over their whole bodies, and being actually inlaid with gold, silver, and precious stones, which had been forced under their skin at an early age. Some astrolo-

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gers also accompanied the princes to reveal to them the fortunate moment for attacking our troops, but their announcements were so public that they served rather the purpose of putting us on our guard. Their armies were beaten, their stockades were forced, and Arracan and Prome, the second and third cities in the empire, were successively taken. At the beginning of 1826 they submitted, ceding large provinces to the Indian government, which greatly strengthened their frontier on its south-eastern side, and paying a million of money as an indemnification for the expenses of the war.

On the north-western side of the company's territories a conquest of equal importance was made by lord Combermere, who, as sir Stapleton Cotton, had been one of Wellington's most distinguished officers in the Peninsula. The fortress of Bhurtpore was one of the strongest in India; in former days it had baffled all the skill and resolution of lord Lake, whose only military failure consisted in his repulse from before its walls. Quarrels among the native princes on the subject of the succession to the chief authority rendered our interference necessary to establish the legitimate prince in possession of his dominions, and to expel his cousin, who had usurped them, and, at the end of 1825, lord Combermere, as commander-in-chief, led against Bhurtpore one of the most powerful armies that at that time had ever been collected in one expedition in British India. The fortifications of the place had been greatly strengthened since lord Lake's attack, and it was held by a resolute garrison of 20,000 men; but means which they had never anticipated were employed by the assailants, and they speedily proved irresistible. The wide, deep moat that surrounded the walls was drained, mines were run under the most important bastions, and the explosion caused such vast breaches in the walls that the garrison, though fighting with heroic valour, were unable to defend them against the British troops, who poured in in overpowering numbers. The town and citadel surrendered, and its capture greatly strengthened the belief entertained by the native powers of our invincibility, which had previously been somewhat damaged by the existence of a place which had hitherto defied our assaults with impunity.

At home the new cabinet had hardly been formed before divisions arose in it, and on the meeting of parliament it appeared so incurably weak that lord Goderich resigned his office, and was succeeded at the treasury by the duke of Wellington; Peel becoming home secretary in the place of lord Lansdowne. There was no other change of great importance at first, though shortly afterwards, a dispute arising about the disposal of some seats in the house of commons, where two boroughs, Penryn and East Retford had been disfranchised for notorious and constant bribery, Mr. Huskisson

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and the rest of those who were looked upon as Canning's party, lord Dudley, lord Palmerston, and Mr. Grant, resigned, and were succeeded by sir George Murray, lord Aberdeen, sir Henry Hardinge, and Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald.

This last appointment had a most important though unexpected result, in accelerating the settlement of the question which had proved a stumbling-block to so many administrations, that of Roman Catholic emancipation. The Dissenters laboured under equal disabilities, which, however, were removed at the beginning of the year by carrying a bill, brought in by lord John Russell, for the repeal of the acts, commonly called the test and corporation acts, which compelled all holders of any place under the crown, all members of corporations and other public officers to receive the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. The ministers offered but a slight opposition to the bill, which indeed a large majority of Churchmen looked upon with favour; the chief resistance to it arising from lord Eldon and the extreme Tory party, who foresaw that the admission of the Protestant Dissenters to civil privileges would increase the difficulty of maintaining the exclusion of the Roman Catholics.

And that difficulty was daily becoming greater. Twice since the beginning of the reign a bill for their emancipation had passed the commons, though it was subsequently rejected by the lords; and in Ireland, where, from the great numerical superiority of the Roman Catholic population, the question excited stronger feelings of personal interest than in England, the agitation, designed to secure the eventual success of the measure, had of late years been carried on with a degree of organization and skill that made it formidable, not only to the peace of any ministry, but to the tranquillity of the kingdom itself. The leader of this agitation was a barrister of the name of Daniel O'Connell, a man by his natural talents, by his fertility of resource, by his eloquence, and even by the very faults of that eloquence, always apt to run into exaggeration and bombast, admirably fitted to obtain an influence over an ignorant populace, especially over one whose feelings were as easily excited as those of the Irish; but, by his want of courage, truth, honesty, and disinterestedness, not calculated to acquire the respect of the higher classes. By his authority an extensive society had been formed under the name of the Catholic Association, which had for some years exacted very large sums under the title of the Catholic Rent from the whole Irish population, and had employed their resources to extend the authority of the association and of the Roman Catholic priesthood so successfully, that in Munster, Leinster, and Connaught the poorer class of voters were more under their influence than under that of their landlords.

This fact O'Connell now determined to prove in a most decisive manner: though a Roman Catholic could not take his seat in parliament, there was no law to prevent his being elected by a constituency. Mr. Fitzgerald had vacated his seat as member for Clare by his acceptance of office; and O'Connell now offered himself as a candidate against him, and in July, 1828, was returned by a large majority. The duke of Wellington and Peel considered, no doubt with truth, that this event made the maintenance of the Roman Catholic disabilities impracticable. But there were great difficulties in the way of their removal, some being of their own creation, as only the year before they had refused to form a part of Canning's ministry, solely because he was favourable to a measure which they now were compelled to pronounce indispensable.

The outcry against them both was very general; it was most violent against Peel, because he was regarded as the more deeply pledged to the principle of maintaining the Protestant ascendancy; and when he resigned his seat for the University of Oxford, and offered himself for re-election, he was defeated by sir Robert Inglis by a great majority. The disinclination of the king to emancipation had also to be got over, for he entertained a strong opinion against it; but, at last his consent was obtained, and, in 1829, the bill introduced by the government for the removal of the Roman Catholic disabilities was carried by large majorities in both houses of parliament; not without incurring the most vehement opposition from the high Tory party, whom it alienated from the duke's government so completely, that they began to prefer the idea of even a Whig ministry to one by which they had been disappointed, and, as they brought themselves to fancy, designedly betrayed.

It was a year of considerable distress, which the government proceeded, though with greatly diminished power, to remedy by very large measures of economy and retrenchment; and which encouraged the opposition again to bring forward proposals for a reform in parliament, though these were at first limited to a motion to confer members on the large towns of Leeds, Manchester, and Birmingham, which had never as yet been represented in parliament. This motion was defeated, as was one made by O'Connell to introduce household suffrage, and vote by ballot; and before the agitation for reform could assume any very definite shape, the king, whose health had been for some time decaying, died, expiring on the 20th of June, 1830, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

Had he been born in a private station, George IV. would very probably have been an amiable and distinguished, perhaps even a great man; for he had an excellent natural disposition, and very considerable abilities of various kinds; but unhappily his position perverted the first by the temptations which it afforded him to

selfish indulgence, and caused the second to be wasted in mere superficial accomplishments. His regency was marked by most glorious success in war; his reign by a very great amelioration of the general condition of the people. He died at a time fortunate for his own comfort, when great changes were at hand, to which he would perhaps with difficulty have been brought to consent, but which he would have found himself wholly powerless to avert or to delay.

CHAPTER LXXI.

WILLIAM IV.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Austria.</i>	A.D.	<i>Russia.</i>	A.D.	<i>Portugal.</i>	A.D.
Francis II.		Nicholas I.		John VI.	
Ferdinand . . .	1835	<i>Prussia.</i>		Maria di Gloria .	1826
		Fred. William III.		<i>Pope.</i>	
<i>France.</i>				Leo XII.	
Charles X.		<i>Spain.</i>		Gregory XVI.	
Louis Philippe . .	1830	Ferdinand VII.		<i>Belgium.</i>	
		Maria Isabella . .	1833	Leopold . . .	1830

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HE duke of Clarence, the next brother of the late king, succeeded to the throne by the title of William IV. He had been bred a sailor, in which profession in his youth he had seen a good deal of actual service, though he had been engaged in no battle; and he had lately filled the office of lord high admiral, till within the last few months, when, in consequence of his differences with officers of more practical knowledge, he was removed by the duke of Wellington. He was supposed to be inclined to a more liberal view of politics than his elder brothers; and the reforming party throughout the kingdom formed great hopes from his accession.

He was in his sixty-fifth year, so that his reign could hardly be expected to be a very long one; but it was marked by most important events. The question of parliamentary reform had been of late exciting increased attention, and the party of the reformers had gained great additional strength from the restoration of the Protestant Dissenters and Roman Catholics to their civil privileges; a strength which was further augmented by the revolution in France, which expelled Charles X. from his throne, just at the time when the old parliament was dissolved. These circum-

stances had great influence on the new elections, and combined to produce the return to the house of commons of a majority of members favourable to great alterations. Parliament met in November, and earl Grey, who from his first entrance into the house of commons had been a steady advocate of reform, took the earliest opportunity of pressing his views upon the ministry. The duke of Wellington, in reply, declared himself incredulous of the possibility of effecting any real improvement in a constitution which, in spite of its apparent anomalies, worked so well as our existing system of representation, and announced his resolution to resist any attempt to alter it. This declaration produced great discontent; in the city of London it excited such violent feelings that the king, who had intended to dine with the lord mayor on the 9th of November, was advised to abandon his design, lest he should be insulted in the streets; and before the end of the month the ministers received a decisive defeat in the house of commons, and resigned their office.

The new prime minister was earl Grey; and the cabinet was composed partly of Whigs: Mr. Brougham becoming lord chancellor with the title of lord Brougham, the marquis of Lansdowne being president of the council; and lord Althorpe chancellor of the exchequer; partly of liberal Tories of Mr. Canning's party: lord Palmerston being foreign secretary, lord Melbourne home secretary, and lord Goderich secretary for the colonies, while the duke of Richmond though commonly classed among the high Tories, was made postmaster-general, he having, as it were, a vested interest in parliamentary reform, in favour of which the very first motion ever made had been brought forward by his grandfather, shortly before the beginning of Mr. Pitt's first administration. The marquis of Wellesley became lord steward, the Irish secretary was Mr. Stanley, grandson of the earl of Derby, and lord John Russell, who had of late taken a very prominent part in the debates, and whose influence from this time forward increased with great rapidity, was paymaster of the forces; but these three were not in the cabinet.

The ministry began at once to apply themselves to the preparation of a bill which, to use the language in which lord Grey described its requisites beforehand, "should secure to the people a due influence in the great council of the nation, and should also secure, by that means, confidence and satisfaction in the determinations of parliament." But even while they were engaged in the deliberations necessary for this object, their attention was distracted by the affairs of Ireland, where O'Connell, who had found the agitation for Roman Catholic emancipation very profitable, had now invented a pretext for a fresh agitation, in urging his followers to clamour for

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a repeal of the union, while he stimulated their hopes by language more inflammatory than ever. So manifestly seditious were many of his harangues, that the government at last decided on prosecuting him for sedition; and though he pleaded guilty, the ministry subsequently found themselves so greatly in need of his aid to carry the reform bill that they never brought him up for judgment.

At the beginning of March lord John Russell introduced the reform bill into the house of commons; but the changes proposed by it were so much more extensive than had been anticipated that many members previously in favour of some reform were startled, and the second reading was only carried by a majority of one; while, a few days afterwards, the ministers were defeated on the question whether the entire number of members of the house of commons should be reduced by sixty-two, or should remain at its former amount.

Parliament, though hardly six months old, was at once dissolved; and fresh elections took place, attended in many places with the most outrageous violence. Many of the leading reformers did not scruple at the most flagrant misrepresentation of the acts and motives of their opponents, exciting the people to deeds of personal violence; while the populace, who had been led to conceive the most absurd expectations of personal advantage from the bill, were but too ready to follow their guidance, and broke out into every kind of excess. The demagogue in Shakespeare promises his followers that he would cause seven halfpenny loaves to be sold for a penny, and that he would make it felony to drink small beer; and hopes of a result of the reform bill somewhat similar were confidently entertained not only by the uneducated classes, but by those who had not ignorance to plead as their excuse for the preposterous delusions which they cherished in others, and professed to believe in themselves. One of the warmest and at the same time shrewdest advocates* of the proposed change jested upon the pictures with which they deceived themselves, and which scarcely needed exaggeration to make them ridiculous, saying that "young ladies who were never asked to dance expected at once to be provided with partners, they who had never been asked to marry expected to have husbands found for them; schoolboys believed that grounds and supines would be abolished, and that currant tarts would fall in price; bad poets made sure of readers for their epics, and fools would be disappointed as usual." But the folly of these anticipations became too serious for ridicule when it led, as it did in this instance, to rapine, incendiarism, and murder.

The new parliament carried the bill through the house of commons by a large majority, but the lords threw it out; and the

* The Rev. Sidney Smith.

populace, infuriated at their disappointment, broke out into the most frightful disturbances; with the exception of the riots in London, in 1780, no such fearful scenes had taken place in the island since the civil wars. At Derby the mob forced open the gaol and liberated the prisoners; at Nottingham they burnt the ancient castle, once a royal residence, because it now belonged to the duke of Newcastle, who took a prominent part in opposition to all reform; and at Bristol they burnt the greater part of the public buildings; the Mansion-house, the Custom-house, the bishop's palace, the gaols, and great numbers of private dwellings were set on fire; a vast amount of property was destroyed, nor could order be restored till the troops were called out, who by frequent charges dispersed the rioters, but not till nearly 100 had been killed and wounded; many being also burnt in the houses to which they had set fire, and which they were engaged in plundering.

At the next meeting of parliament the ministers again brought in the reform bill, having modified it in some respects, with the hope of softening the opposition of the peers; and the alterations which had been made did induce that body to read the bill a second time, though it again left the ministers in a minority on questions of detail. Lord Grey then proposed to the king to allow him to overbear their opposition by a large creation of new peers, and, on his majesty's refusal, resigned his office. But the duke of Wellington, to whom the king entrusted the arrangements for a new ministry, found himself unable to form one; and consequently the king, being forced to recur to the former government, had no resource except to comply with their demands. The injury with which the constitution was threatened was, however, averted by the prudence of the opposition peers, who retired from the house, in preference to persisting in an opposition which they knew must now be not only ineffectual, but pernicious; and, on the 7th of June, 1832, the reform bill received the royal assent. Its most important provisions may be described in a few words. Many towns which had gradually grown up to wealth and importance, and which were hitherto unrepresented, such as Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, received members; others, in which the corporation alone had hitherto been the electing body, received a large addition to their constituencies, by the admission of householders, who paid a certain amount of rent, to vote; many small boroughs were disfranchised; additional members were given to the counties; and in them also the constituencies were increased by the enfranchisement of tenants at will; while the expense of elections, which had risen to a frightful height, was diminished by the time allowed for each being reduced, in the case of a borough to one day, and in that of a county to two. The greater part of these changes were both reasonable and desira-

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ble. Even the most questionable of them, the disfranchisement of the small boroughs, was irresistibly plausible, though not carried out with much impartiality. Their original creation had undoubtedly been an abuse; for the places now disfranchised had not, for the most part, been of any consequence at any time, but had been enfranchised as a favour to the rich landowners under whose influence they were, or, in Cornwall, with the object of increasing the authority of the crown, which the stannaries and several ancient privileges had at one time rendered paramount in that county.*

So extensive a measure would hardly have been proposed had it not been for the refusal of the duke of Wellington to listen to any plan of reform whatever: and this is not the only instance in which the rejection of moderate proposals has led to the eventual adoption of measures of a far more extensive character. Still, it may fairly be admitted, as it has been even by those who at the time were opposed to it, that the bill contained nothing inconsistent with the principles of the constitution, or with sound reason and policy; and that, as long as it was suffered to remain unaltered, it, generally speaking, worked well, and that in no equal period had the entire people of the united kingdom made greater advances in every kind of material prosperity.

Although, however, both the reform bill and the emancipation of the Roman Catholics were wise, just, and necessary measures, the undeniable fact that their success was mainly to be ascribed to intimidation was productive of great mischief, by leading artful demagogues to fancy, and to persuade the populace that similar violence on their part would obtain for them whatever other concessions they might desire; and this argument was used in Ireland by O'Connell to inflame the peasantry of that country to demand the extinction of tithes, the abolition of the Irish Protestant Church, and the repeal of the union. The whole of that island soon became a scene of the most fearful outrage; the clergy who endeavoured to procure the payment of the tithe due to them were murdered without mercy, their barns and their houses were burnt, and universal lawlessness seemed almost established throughout the land. The government acted with vigour. They brought in a bill regulating the future management of Church property in Ireland in a manner calculated to remove many of the complaints which had been urged against the Church, and introduced an act, which was speedily passed by both houses, called a coercion bill, giving the

* It was remarkable that these small boroughs had formed the avenue by which every man of eminence since the revolution had originally entered parliament. So that lord Campbell calls them "so convenient and useful, that we cannot help regretting the scandal which made their abolition necessary, for I fear we cannot deny that they sent to parliament members more eloquent and better able to serve the state than the new boroughs with larger constituencies which have been substituted for them."—*Life of Lord Cowper*,—*Lives of Chancellors*, iv. 237.

lord-lieutenant power to prevent all public meetings which he might deem dangerous, and to put counties or districts in which outrages were rife under martial law. These laws had some effect, though not all that was desired, in tranquillising the country, and gave the ministers time to apply their attention to other objects, the most important of which were the alteration of the poor-law in England, and the abolition of slavery in the West Indies.

As long as ten years before the question of the gradual entire abolition of slavery had occupied the attention of the existing ministry; but the local legislatures in the different West Indian islands had been unwilling to take any steps which might seem like a recognition of the right of the mother country to interfere in the matter. Their conduct in this respect had excited great discontent among the negroes, leading, in some instances, to alarming riots, and, at length, at the beginning of 1832, a most formidable insurrection broke out over the whole island of Jamaica, which even the troops, who were called out, could not quell without great difficulty. These circumstances, and the general course of events in the West Indies, led the government to think that it would not be possible to maintain the system of slavery much longer, while at the same time they were deeply imbued with the growing feeling that the same principles of morality, which had required the abolition of the trade in slaves, equally required the extinction of the whole system of slavery. At the same time they felt that it could not be extinguished without diminishing the value of West Indian property; that that value was so great that it concerned the interest of the whole kingdom that it should not be seriously impaired; and that, moreover, the property of the planters in slaves had been recognized by so many laws that, apart from all considerations of policy, they had a positive right to compensation, if this property were put an end to by parliament. After much consideration and negotiation with the planters, a bill was passed, at once abolishing slavery under its existing conditions, but binding the slaves to a kind of apprenticeship for seven years, during which they were to be compelled to work for their masters three-fourths of their time, and allotting a sum of 20,000,000*l.* to be divided among the different landowners in proportion to the number of slaves which each of them possessed. To the great honour of the British people this vast sum was cheerfully voted, not to get rid of an injury, but to relieve the nation from what was now felt to be a sin. At a later period the term of apprenticeship was abridged; and in the summer of 1838 every vestige of slavery was abolished in the British possessions.

After the experience of nearly twenty years this measure, then warmly advocated by all classes in England, and assented to by

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those personally interested, has been found productive of great and apparently incurable injury to the proprietors of the West Indian islands, while it is confidently maintained by many persons that the condition of the negro has not been practically improved by it. The alteration in our new poor-law was a measure of less questionable wisdom and advantage. Under the system of local administration poor-rates had been allowed to increase to an alarming extent, many working men having been relieved from them, merely in order to save their masters from paying them fair wages, till, at last, the sum annually collected reached the enormous amount of seven millions of money. The administration of these laws was now placed under a central board of commissioners, responsible to parliament for its proper working; parishes were consolidated into unions for the purpose of securing a better regulated economy; and though the partial abolition of the system of giving relief out of the workhouse has led to some hardships, there is reason to hope that the new plan, which has certainly relieved the rate-payer, has begun also to create a better and more independent feeling on the part of those who are most liable to be reduced to apply to the parish for relief.

Before the passing of this new poor-law act, however, lord Grey had quitted office. In spite of the coercion bill the Irish agitation had become so formidable, that he was led to propose a further reduction of the Irish Church establishment, to which lord Goderich (who had lately been created earl of Ripon), the duke of Richmond, Mr. Stanley, and sir James Graham, the first lord of the admiralty, entertained such strong objections, that they resigned their posts. A few days later lord Althorpe also resigned, in consequence of differences with lord Grey about other matters connected with the government of Ireland; and lord Grey, feeling his administration fatally weakened by all these secessions, also quitted the treasury, and was succeeded by lord Melbourne, a man universally popular for his high-bred manners, his agreeable, social qualities, and his genuine kindness of heart, but who had not as yet given any indication of high statesman-like abilities, or of that energy of character and resolute industry which often in some degree supply their place, and which are as indispensable as any other qualities to the prime minister of a country with such large interests and such complicated relations as those of Great Britain. Under lord Melbourne lord Althorpe resumed his post of chancellor of the exchequer, but was compelled to relinquish it in the autumn, in consequence of the death of his father, lord Spencer, which removed him to the house of peers; and this event finally broke up the Whig ministry.

Sir Robert Peel became the new prime minister; but, though the late government had lost a great deal of that popularity which

the party in general had derived from the reform bill, the country was not yet ripe for so complete a change ; and a fresh parliament, which the new minister summoned, was so unfavourable to him, that, in the spring of 1835, he also was forced to resign, and lord Melbourne's administration, with but little alteration, returned to office.

The next two years were marked by no striking events ; and in June, 1837, king William died, and was succeeded on the British throne by his niece Victoria, our present gracious sovereign, the only daughter of the duke of Kent ; while, as the salic law, which forbids the succession of females to the crown, prevails in Hanover, that kingdom was now separated from Great Britain, and became the inheritance of the duke of Cumberland, who succeeded to its throne under the title of Ernest I.

CHAPTER LXXII.

VICTORIA.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>Austria.</i>	A.D.	<i>Spain.</i>	A.D.	<i>Popes.</i>	A.D.
Francis II.		Maria Isabella.		Gregory XVI.	
Ferdinand.	1835			Pius VIII.	1846
Francis Joseph	1848	<i>Portugal.</i>		Pius IX.	1846
<i>Prussia.</i>		Maria di Gloria.		<i>Belgium.</i>	
Fred William III.		Pedro V.	1853	Leopold.	
Fred. William IV.	1840				

A.D.
1837.



QUEEN VICTORIA had just completed her eighteenth year when she was thus called upon to rule over the most extensive dominions in the world. It is remarkable that the reigns of all our preceding female sovereigns have been periods of war and disquietude, always, however, except under the brief rule of Mary I., successfully encountered, and the era now commencing was not destined to differ from them in this particular. Our history will close while our gracious sovereign is still in middle age ; and already she has seen fearful riots and treason both in England and Ireland, revolt in Canada, in India long murderous warfare and unprecedented disaster from foreign enemies, followed by insurrection among her own subjects which shook the authority of England in the east to its very foundations ; war in the Levant, war in China, and, after nearly forty years of peace, war also in Europe. In the happier part

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of her career she has likewise resembled her two last predecessors, for she has seen all these dangers and miseries surmounted; she has seen the whole of her native dominions restored to tranquillity, prosperity, and sincere loyalty; she has seen the calamities which befel her troops in India avenged and effaced by a series of victories; she has seen her arms and her policy triumph alike in the eastern and western extremities of Asia; she has seen Russian ferocity defeated and humbled, Russian ambition and aggression beaten back and bridled; so that, having thus disarmed jealousy, intimidated enmity, and conciliated disaffection, she may reasonably hope for the future to enjoy tranquillity, earned and made sweeter by her previous anxiety and trouble; happier, should such be her lot, by her example and encouragement to foster among her people the arts of peace and the blessings of education and refinement, which no sovereign has ever been better able to appreciate, than whilst admiring the martial exploits of her soldiers, or with her own hands dispensing the rewards of their valour, or, more gracefully still, showing a womanly sympathy in their sufferings.

The first disturbances broke out in Canada, where indeed they had been for some time apprehended. Canada is divided into two provinces, the upper and the lower, of which the Upper, or inland one, was generally united and loyal; but the Lower province, having a more mixed population of French and English, was constantly distracted by the disputes between the two races, the former of which was, perhaps naturally, not averse to see their connexion with Great Britain weakened, if not terminated. Recent events in Europe, by the encouragement which they had afforded to revolutionary ideas, had strengthened this feeling; and a large party, under the guidance of a man of French extraction, named Papineau, began to clamour for measures which would have had the effect of rendering the government entirely republican. They were of course refused, and Papineau and his chief associates became so furious at their disappointment, and so openly seditious in the language which they held to the populace, that lord Gosford, the governor, determined on arresting them. Though he was far from being aware how general was the disaffection which they had excited, he took the precaution of sending a small body of troops with the civil officers; but the soldiers found themselves opposed by 1500 men well armed and strongly posted, and were forced to retire with some loss. It was not the only occasion on which the disaffected party ventured to measure their strength with the queen's troops; but fortunately the commander-in-chief in the province, sir John Colborne, was one of the most distinguished and skilful officers in the whole British army, and, as there was now open rebellion, he went in person against the rebels, and, though not

without some loss, easily routed them, The flame of insurrection had even spread to Upper Canada, where a man of the name of Mackenzie endeavoured to surprise Toronto, hoping for the aid of a body of Americans, who, without the sanction of their government, seized an island in the St. Lawrence belonging to Great Britain, and attacked some of the Canadian villages; but sir Francis Head, the governor of the upper province, and colonel Macnab beat back the rebels, and inflicted severe chastisement on the Americans, and the home government sent out lord Durham, as governor, with large powers for the suppression of the present evils and the prevention of similar dangers in future.

Unhappily, lord Durham entertained an exaggerated idea of the authority with which he was thus invested, and some of the measures which he adopted were so contrary to the principles of British law that the ministers at home had no choice but to disavow them. He at once threw up his commission, and left the government to sir John Colborne, who administered it for some time with great firmness and wisdom. The disavowal of lord Durham's proceedings, and his consequent retirement, acted as an encouragement to the rebels, who assembled in greater numbers than ever, encountering a strong force which Colborne sent against them with no less than 4000 men, while 500 Americans, with several pieces of artillery, crossed the frontier to support them; but both bodies were decisively routed, and so rapid was the restoration of tranquillity and confidence that, out of the vast number of prisoners who were taken, Colborne thought it sufficient to execute only two, and to sentence a few more to transportation. He was deservedly raised to the peerage by the title of lord Seaton, and since his time the important province of Canada has been as much distinguished for its fidelity and loyalty as any other portion of the queen's colonial dominions.

In 1837 and the two following years there was severe distress in England, arising partly from a succession of bad harvests; and this distress producing general discontent, enabled a set of artful demagogues to inflame the people by representations that their sufferings arose from their not yet having a proper weight in the legislature, which could never be obtained by them till a fresh reform bill should be passed, the chief enactments of which were to establish universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual parliaments, and the abolition of the property qualification for members of parliament. These, and one or two articles of minor importance, they called the people's charter, to which they were entitled as freemen, and its advocates assumed the name of Chartists. They soon became a numerous and formidable body, and, when their petitions were rejected by parliament, they sought to intimidate opposition

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by large public meetings, which soon led to most alarming riots. At Birmingham, after parading the streets, they attacked the houses of all whom they thought unfavourable to them, and presently, excited by their own violence, began a general destruction of property, dragging furniture from the dwelling-houses and goods from the shops into the streets, making a general bonfire of them, and then setting fire to the houses themselves. At Newport, in Monmouthshire, an outbreak occurred with all the forms of a regular insurrection. A person of the name of Frost, who, though only a linen-draper, had been lately made a magistrate, collected 5000 men in arms, and attacked the town at night with the intention of surprising and overpowering the soldiers quartered there, and then raising the whole country in rebellion. Fortunately, previous information of his design had reached the mayor and chief magistrates, and a small body of troops were prepared to receive them; they took post in the principal inn, and when the insurgents attacked it replied to their fire with such vigour that the assailants fled. Frost and some others of the ringleaders were tried, convicted, and, as the government forbore to execute them, were transported for life; and even this penalty was remitted in 1856, and Frost was permitted to return to England.

At the same time the progress of events in the East threatened a rupture with France. Mehemet Ali, the pacha of Egypt, was anxious to render his authority independent of the Sultan, and his ambition had brought on war between him and the Sublime Porte, in which he had gained considerable advantages over the Turkish troops. The French were undisguisedly favourable to his projects, and, as the other great powers of Europe, especially England, were very jealous of France obtaining a preponderating influence in Egypt, England, Russia, and Austria entered into a convention with Turkey, according to which, the Sultan agreed to concede a portion of Mehemet's demands, while the allies promised to compel him to withdraw the rest. Mehemet, however, would not submit, and, in consequence, we sent a powerful fleet, under the command of sir Robert Stopford, with commodore Napier as second in command, to the coast of Syria, which bombarded Beyrout and Acre, took these towns from Mehemet, and restored them to the Turks, and thus speedily compelled the pacha to accept the terms which had been offered him. Fortunately, just at this moment, the ministry of M. Thiers, in France, who was eager to support him, was replaced by the more pacific cabinet of M. Guizot, who was inclined to consider the maintenance of the Turkish power unimpaired as the line of policy the most important of all to the tranquillity and security of Europe.

It was well for us that European war was thus averted; for in

India we had become involved in hostilities which severely taxed the whole energies of the empire. The governors-general, since lord Hastings, had been men of judgment and vigour very inferior to his. Lord William Bentinck had in some respects improved the internal condition of the country; he had entirely ridded it of the Thugs, a band of assassins who had long infested the north of the Deccan; and he had greatly checked the practice of the suttee, the name given to the burning of Hindoo widows on the funeral pile of their husbands: but at the same time, in pursuance of his views of retrenchment and economy, he had diminished the military force which had hitherto been kept up, till it was scarcely more than sufficient to maintain the authority of the company in time of peace. He was succeeded by lord Auckland, who occupied himself more with the foreign policy of his government, if it may be so called, without sufficiently listening to the advice of those to whom a long residence in India had given a better acquaintance with its affairs.

The decease of a native prince in India very commonly gave rise to disputes concerning the succession to his power; and such an event had lately taken place in Affghanistan, an extensive, wild, and mountainous region lying between Persia and our Indian dominions. It would occupy too much of our space to detail the various events which distinguished the contest between the competitors for the vacant throne; and it will be sufficient for our purpose to say that it ended by two of them dividing the country between themselves. Mahmoud, the elder son of the deceased prince, establishing himself at Herat, on the north-western frontier, and Dost Mahomed, the brother of a former vizier, named Futteh Khan, becoming master of the city and province of Cabul, which lies at no great distance from the Indus, while Mahmoud's younger brother, Soojah, who had at first usurped the throne, was expelled from the country; took refuge at Lahore, with Runjeet Singh, the rajah of the Sikhs; and implored the assistance of the British. Lord Auckland, hoping to fix Cabul and Lahore in our alliance, determined on restoring him to the throne, and in 1839 sent sir John Keane with an army to re-establish him in his usurped authority. Keane crossed the Indus, stormed Ghuznee, the strongest fortress in the district, sent a division against Jellalabad, which took that city, one of some importance on the eastern border of the country, and in the autumn the whole army entered Cabul, and re-established Soojah's authority over the whole province.

Those who knew India best foretold that the difficulties of the enterprise were only beginning. Nevertheless, lord Auckland ventured to recall the greater part of his army, leaving a small force in the principal cities, to maintain for a while the authority of the restored prince. Sir Willoughby Cotton, who was soon replaced by

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general Elphinstone, was left with the chief command; general sir Robert Sale was placed at Jellalabad, and general Nott at Candahar, a large city some distance to the south. Preparing for a long sojourn in the country, Sale, sir William Macnaghten, the political resident at Cabul, and others, sent for their wives and families; and for a brief space all was tranquillity and ease. But Soojah's government was weak; Runjeet Singh died, the Sikhs became less friendly, and though Dost Mahomed, who ventured to commence hostilities, was easily defeated, and forced to implore Macnaghten's protection, it was soon evident that peace was not settled on a very trustworthy foundation. The Affghans in the interior became turbulent, and fought two or three actions against Nott, in which they were beaten; the governor of Herat was intriguing against us, and things seemed to indicate a general conspiracy throughout the whole of Affghanistan against us, and against the prince whom we had set up.

At last, on the 2nd of November, 1841, it broke out in open insurrection in the city of Cabul. A mob suddenly attacked the houses of the British officers. One of the most distinguished of them, sir Alexander Burnes, with his brother and a small body of sepoys, was cut to pieces, and success emboldened the insurgents to commit all kinds of outrages. Unhappily the British army was stationed, not in the city, but in cantonments outside the walls, and Elphinstone behaved with unaccountable supineness. He had been a brave officer, but he was past the prime of life, and in very bad health. He took no steps to crush the disturbance in the bud, while it would have been easy to do so; a small body of troops, sent with that object by shah Soojah, proved useless; and in a few hours the whole city was in the possession of the insurgents. Elphinstone and Macnaghten sent to Jellalabad and Candahar for reinforcements; but they could not be expected for some weeks, and the supplies and magazines of the army had fallen into the hands of the enemy. Elphinstone began to think of a capitulation, and even of purchasing a safe retreat by bribing the leaders of the insurrection; while the necessity of retreating was increased by the news of the revolt having spread inland, where one of our regiments had been overpowered and cut to pieces, and by the failure of an attack made by general Shelton upon the insurgents, who had taken up a position in front of our camp which enabled them to cut off our supplies.

At the beginning of December the enemy were strengthened by the arrival of Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Mahomed; and we also considered his arrival a favourable event, since, as his father and brothers were in our hands, it was thought that they might be looked upon as hostages for his friendly conduct. Negotiations

for our evacuation of Cabul had been already commenced, and on the 10th of December the terms were fully arranged, we agreeing to quit the province, to withdraw our support from shah Soojah, and to restore Dost Mahomed to liberty; and the Affghans promising to supply us with provisions and means of transport for our baggage in the retreat.

The agreement had scarcely been completed before the Affghans began to show a disposition to violate it, while Macnaghten on his part endeavoured to take advantage of dissensions, which already began to arise among some of their chiefs, to make arrangements more favourable to lord Auckland's views of policy; but the hopes which were thus held out to him were only lures to lead him to his own destruction: at a conference with Akbar Khan, on the 23rd of December, he was murdered, and his mangled remains were exhibited in triumph to the populace in the great bazaar of the city. The success of this act of treachery stimulated the Affghans to make fresh demands upon the British general. He gave up the greater part of his guns, sent orders to Sale to evacuate Jellalabad, and, on the 6th of January, commenced his retreat. Even had the country and its inhabitants been friendly, a march through that district at that season of the year would have been attended with difficulty and hardship, for the road runs through a rugged, mountainous district, and often through narrow defiles overhung with fearful precipices, while the winter in that exposed region is as severe as in the most inclement countries of Europe. The retreating army, including camp-followers and all its numerous attendants, amounted to nearly 17,000 men. The snow, which was already deep on the ground, fell fast. No sufficient provision for shelter or for fuel had been, or perhaps could have been made, and the very first night saw many frozen to death.

From the first scarcely any appearance of discipline or order was kept up. The next day the retreating host was attacked by the Affghans, who occupied the high ground overlooking the road, from which they kept up a ceaseless and unanswered fire on our troops, too dispirited by their want of a resolute leader to attempt to make a stand. In a narrow defile, known as the Coord Cabul Pass, nearly 3000 are said to have perished without an effort to save themselves, or even to sell their lives dearly by a gallant resistance. Treachery by day, cold and hunger by night, were laying low strong men; but others were there besides men. In the van rode several ladies, who the year before had repaired to Cabul to join their husbands, and who now, with hearts sad but as firm as those of the bravest soldiers, shared with them the horrors and dangers of the retreat. The widowed lady Macnaghten, the worthy wife of the gallant Sale, her daughter, Mrs. Sturt, and

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others, some with young children, some expecting the speedy birth of children, were exposed to the same hardships as the meanest troopers in the army. One was wounded; another saw her husband slain before her eyes. One had her infant torn from her arms by the savage Affghans. Worse danger threatened them, for the animals on which they rode began to faint from want of food; and at last Elphinstone surrendered the married officers and their families to Akbar Khan, who, for the promise of a large sum of money, undertook to conduct them safely to Peshawur.

Savage and faithless as he was, he kept his word to some extent, preserving his captives in safety, and even in some degree of comparative comfort, while the army from which they were now separated melted away rapidly under its accumulating miseries. On those miseries we will forbear to dwell. The cold became more severe, the attacks of the Affghans bolder and more incessant. For a day or two the rearguard, led by general Shelton, kept them a little at bay; but he and Elphinstone, having been decoyed to a conference with Akbar, were detained as prisoners, and the troops had no longer a commander. One the 13th of January, one haggard, exhausted, wounded man staggered into Jellalabad, believing himself to be the only survivor of 17,000 who had quitted Cabul but one short week before,

No such disaster had ever befallen British troops in any quarter of the world. It would have been grievous any where. In India, where one of the chief foundations of our power is the belief which the natives entertain of our invincibility, it threatened to be ruinous. Lord Auckland, however, did not propose to make any effort to retrieve it, but was contented with sending general George Pollock, with a small force, to Peshawur to co-operate in securing the safe retreat of Sale and Nott, who, with equal courage and judgment, had refused obedience to the order which bade them abandon Candahar and Jellalabad. But the ministry at home had lately been changed, and a new governor-general was on his way to Bengal. On the last day of February, 1842, lord Ellenborough landed, and his arrival was the beginning of a bolder and more successful policy. He was equally with his predecessor resolved to withdraw the troops from Affghanistan, where there was no object to be gained by retaining them; but he was also resolved first to strike a blow which should retrieve our credit in that country, and show that we were not driven from it, but that our retirement was the voluntary result of our own policy. In these wise views he was gallantly assisted by Sale, who was holding Jellalabad with indomitable resolution. As soon as he heard of Pollock's arrival at Peshawur he sent letters to him, eagerly begging for prompt succour, and telling him the straits to which he was reduced.

But in the mean time he continued to strengthen his defences and to repel attacks as if no such difficulties surrounded him. A fearful earthquake levelled the principal fortifications with the dust. He repaired them with such speed that Akbar, who commanded the besiegers, had no time to take advantage of the opening which Providence itself seemed to have made for him. Sale's provisions began to fail. He killed his camels and beasts of burden, and, when they were eaten, supplied and, at the same time, encouraged his troops by some successful sallies; and at last, on the 6th of April, poured forth with his whole garrison, routed Akbar, destroyed his camp, and compelled him to a precipitate retreat.

The very day before Pollock had begun his march from Peshawur to relieve him. His previous inactivity had been caused by the necessity of waiting for further reinforcements for the more extensive operations which were now meditated, and for means of transport, which were required to be unusually large, since he had to carry provisions for Sale's men as well as for his own. His way lay through the Khybur Pass, one of the most formidable of all the mountain defiles, and in which, at the beginning of the year, the enemy had defeated a strong detachment of our troops: but Pollock's measures were taken with such combined prudence and vigour that all attempts to stop his advance were fruitless. He seized upon the heights which commanded the pass before a man entered it, and then steadily forced all the barriers which the enemy had erected. They offered him no further resistance, and he soon reached Jellalabad, where he was hailed with joy and thankfulness by the heroic garrison, who had so long held their post amid such unparalleled difficulties.

Nott had held Candahar with equal firmness, dealing one or two heavy blows on the enemy, who besieged him, and at last expelling all the natives from the city to avoid being endangered by their co-operation with those outside the walls. The return of spring brought news of Sale's relief, and encouraged him to plan more active offensive operations; but, in the mean time, a revolution had taken place in the country. At the beginning of April shah Soojah was murdered, and civil war began to rage in Cabul. Akbar Khan, thinking that his possession of our female prisoners afforded him a favourable opportunity, tried to open a separate negotiation with Pollock, who willingly promised to pay a large ransom for their release, and also to procure the liberation of the women of Akbar's family, who were in the power of the British; but, when the Affghan chief saw that Pollock and Sale remained at Jellalabad, he attributed their inaction to weakness, and rose in his demands.

The delay, however, which encouraged him was caused neither

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by weakness, nor by hesitation, but partly by the difficulty of combining operations with Nott, who was at a considerable distance, and partly by want of the means of transport for the baggage and supplies. At last all these embarrassments were overcome. In August Pollock and Nott both began to advance on Cabul. Nott took Ghuznee, which, in March had again fallen into the hands of the Affghans, and, in accordance with a special command of lord Ellenborough, carried off the celebrated gates of Somnauth from the tomb of sultan Mahmoud. Many a strong fort fell before his advancing brigade, and one or two bloody skirmishes showed the Affghans the impossibility of making any effectual resistance. At last, on the 17th of September, he reached Cabul, and found Pollock already there. Futteh Jung, the son of the murdered shah, had taken refuge in his camp, and accompanied his march. In vain large squadrons of enemies occupied a formidable defile in his front, known as the Jugdaluk Pass; they were driven from their stronghold with great slaughter. Akbar, terrified at his progress, tried to arrest it first by fresh negotiation, and afterwards by offering battle at Tezeen. The terms which he proposed were rejected, the army which he commanded was routed, and, on the 15th of September, Pollock entered Cabul in triumph, and installed Futteh Jung on his father's throne.

But he felt that his triumph was incomplete while British ladies remained in Akbar's power. That chief, after his late defeat, had removed his prisoners into the interior of the country, threatening, if his terms were refused, to carry them into a life-long captivity in Turkistan. Pollock at once sent a strong squadron in pursuit, of which Sale himself was one of the commanders. It may well be supposed that no time was lost; but before the pursuers could overtake them their liberty was secured. The commander of the force appointed to conduct them had been won over by a heavy bribe to lead them to the British quarters, and they were on their way thither when they were met by the pursuing cavalry, and restored to their husbands, from whom they had so lately feared that they were parted for ever. One Affghan chief still remained in arms. His force was dispersed by a detachment entrusted by Pollock to general McCaskill; and then the British general, having triumphed over all his enemies, prepared to quit the country. He first destroyed the defences of Jellalabad; and, to leave a lasting mark of his power, he burnt the great bazaar in Cabul, where the body of the murdered Macnaghten had been exposed to the gaze of the populace. On the 12th of October the army passed out of the gates of the city, marching steadily towards our own territories; and in December the campaign was terminated by a grand review at Ferozepoor, and by the release, on our part, of all the Affghan prisoners in our power.

War now followed fast upon war ; but we may be more brief in our detail of the several events which distinguished them, and led them all to a successful issue, than we have been in the narration of the one great disaster which threw a shade over our renown, and for a while threatened our power in India, but which, being borne with fortitude, and retrieved with gallantry, in its ultimate effects perhaps even added to our reputation, by showing that the courage of Britons is not affected by good or bad success, but shines as brightly and as enduringly amid danger and calamity as in the more cheering hours of prosperity and victory.

The Affghan war drew with it the necessity of occupying Scinde, the country on each side of the lower part of the Indus, the ameers or princes of which had long governed it with the most ruthless tyranny, and who, though divided among themselves by disputes respecting the supreme authority, were at all times inclined to combine in treachery towards the British, and were encouraged by our disasters in Cabul to form an open confederacy against our power. Treaties into which we had entered in former times with the ameers permitted us to occupy the country with an armed force ; and lord Ellenborough now sent sir Charles Napier, a veteran of the peninsular war, with a small army to check their hostility by his presence. The ameers were brave men ; the Beloochees, who composed the greater part of their army, were among the most fearless soldiers of the East ; and, confiding in their courage and great superiority of numbers, they commenced operations against Napier, threatening his communications, and intercepting his despatches. His was not a temper to be trifled with. He determined to strike terror into them at once, and by an enterprise which for boldness, skill, and success has scarcely a parallel in the history of war, he left behind him all his army but 500 men, and with that small force threw himself into the desert, to surprise a fortress called Emaun Ghur, which, apart from the difficulty of reaching it, the natives all looked upon as impregnable. They were so panic-struck at the audacity of his movement, that they deserted it at his approach, and he blew it up, and returned to the banks of the Indus.

Thinking that they might be daunted by this exploit, lord Ellenborough offered the ameers a new treaty ; but they were resolved on war, and felt so certain of victory, that they even decided beforehand on what was to be done with the defeated British. All were to be massacred but one ; that one, Napier himself, was to be kept in perpetual captivity, with an iron ring through his nose, chained to the walls of their palace, as a lasting memorial of their triumph.

Such were their expectations ; but they were doomed soon to

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experience the truth of our western proverb, that it is not well to sell the bear's skin before one has caught him. Napier advanced to Meeanee, a village a little to the north of Hyderabad, the capital of the country; and on the 17th of February, 1843, a terrible battle took place. The host of the ameers numbered 35,000 men. The British force was barely 2500. The brother of the conqueror, the eloquent historian of Wellington's achievements in Spain, has recorded in spirit-stirring language how, thick as standing corn, and gorgeous as a garden of flowers, the Beloochees stood in their many-coloured garments and turbans; how their swords flashed in the sun, and their shouts filled the plains; how gallantly they rushed upon our ranks, and how fearlessly they were repelled. Even in the practised hands of these brave horsemen the sweeping sabre proved no match for the rapid firing and firmly-held bayonet of the British infantry, and, after some hours of terrible struggle, our victory was complete. Its fruit was instant in the fall of Hyderabad, reputed one of the richest cities in the East, though the treasure which fell into the hands of the conquerors was far from equalling their expectations, or the reports that had prevailed respecting it.

The ameers, however, had still a large army on foot, under Shere Mahomed, the bravest of their body, who had earned the surname of the Lion by many a deed of daring, and Napier had to prepare for another battle with him. By forming an intrenched camp with ostentatious care, and making a parade of caution, which the Lion interpreted as a sign of fear, he detained him in the neighbourhood till reinforcements raised his army to 5000 men; and then, as the enemy amounted to only five times his own numbers, he fell upon them in the neighbourhood of Hyderabad, utterly discomfited them, and completed the subjugation of the whole country, which lord Ellenborough annexed to the company's dominions, bestowing the government of it, as a fitting reward, on the hero who had conquered it.

Before the end of the same year disputes arose about the succession to the supreme authority in Gwalior, a small Mahratta state to the south of Delhi, which compelled us to interfere in a warlike manner in its affairs; and sir Hugh Gough was sent with a powerful army of 14,000 men to enforce obedience to the views of the governor-general. In a battle of unusual severity at Maharajpore he gave the Mahrattas a decisive defeat. Another victory, gained on the very same day by general Grey at Punniar, over another division of their army, compelled them to entire submission, and for a time there was peace throughout our Indian territories.

It was not of long duration. In the Lahore territory, since better known to us by the name of the Punjab, or the country between

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the five rivers,—the Indus, the Jehlum, the Chenab, the Ravee, and the Gharra,—the death of Runjeet Singh had given rise to civil dissensions. His son, Shere Singh, whom we had recognized as his successor, had been assassinated; and, at last, a boy, named Dhuleep Singh, had become the maharajah; while the vizier was another boy, named Heera Singh, who was shortly afterwards put to death by the troops, who, in fact, had engrossed all the power in the district. They, as an army is apt to be, were eager for war, jealous of our increasing power, and especially of the force which we kept at Ferozepoor. At last, in December, 1845, they declared war against us, and crossing the river Sutlej, a branch of the Gharra, the most eastern of the five rivers, they advanced in hostile array towards Ferozepoor. Lord Ellenborough had lately been recalled, and the new governor-general was sir Henry Hardinge, a soldier of the highest reputation. The commander-in-chief was still sir Hugh Gough, and they both speedily advanced to the threatened frontier with a powerful army.

The whole force of the Sikhs outnumbered them by nearly one-half; but in the numbers concerned in the subsequent engagements there was no great disparity. Our men undervalued the Sikhs as troops, thinking them inferior to the Affghans; but it was soon found that they were equal to any native soldiers who had ever opposed us. Battle followed on battle with almost unexampled rapidity. It was only on the 11th of December that the Sutlej was crossed. The 18th saw a fierce combat at Moodkee, in which the Sikhs were repulsed with the loss of some guns; and, three days afterwards, both armies, having been augmented by considerable reinforcements, met again on the field of Feerozshuhur. So equally balanced was the fortune of the first day that some of our officers counselled a retreat; but the battle was renewed on the morrow; and, at last, after a stubborn conflict, the Sikh generals, who were commonly suspected of treachery, fled from the field, and their army, deprived of its commanders, was forced to retreat, with the loss of half its artillery. Our loss also had been prodigious; and Hardinge thought it necessary to send for fresh reinforcements before venturing on offensive operations. The Sikhs were ready before he was; and by the middle of January, 1846, they again advanced, and threatened Loodiana, which sir Harry Smith succeeded in relieving, though not without a severe action, in which it was again believed that the Sikh general did not wish his troops to be too victorious, lest they should become ungovernable. A few days later, on the 28th of January, a terrible conflict took place at Aliwal, when the Sikhs were driven back across the Sutlej, and on the 10th of February the final battle of the campaign was fought at Sobraon. Once more the Sikh leaders wished to be defeated;

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but their troops fought as usual with the most heroic resolution ; nor did they yield the victory till they had inflicted on their conquerors a loss of more than 2000 men. But they now found the impossibility of continuing the war, and peace was made, by the terms of which the Punjab was divided between two sovereigns, a considerable district being assigned to Gholab Singh, while we occupied the dominions of Dhuleep Singh till he arrived at the age of manhood, and maintained a force in the province, sufficient, it was expected, to enforce the re-establishment of order, and the obedience of the still discontented native army.

It was not, however, easy at once to restore tranquillity among so fickle and restless a people. The governor of Mooltan, an important fortress and district in the south of the province, had long been anxious to convert his vice-royalty into a kingdom, and at last, in the spring of 1848, broke out into open revolt, murdering two British officers, who were at Mooltan, in the discharge of their duty. Had it not been for the firmness and skill of Herbert Edwardes, who, though only a lieutenant, displayed all the qualities of an experienced commander, this unexpected outbreak might have led to serious consequences ; but he collected a small force, and beat Moolraj, the rebel chief, in a pitched battle at Kineyree, on the 18th of June.

At the beginning of 1849 Mooltan was taken by general Whisk, and Moolraj was compelled to surrender. But the length of time that Mooltan resisted encouraged the other Sikh princes to hope that they might be able to take advantage of the employment thus afforded to our Indian government, to get rid of our force, which still occupied a portion of their country, and to relieve themselves from the annual tribute, which by the recent treaty they were bound to pay ; and again they raised the standard of revolt. The soldier, sir H. Hardinge, had been replaced by lord Dalhousie, a civilian ; but war was not encountered with less vigour than before. In November, 1848, sir Hugh Gough, who had now been ennobled by the title of lord Gough, crossed the Sutlej, hoping to crush the insurrection in the bud, and, after a fierce skirmish at Ramnuggur, on the 13th of January, 1849, came in front of the whole force of the enemy at Chillianwallah. A most fearful conflict took place, in which our loss was tremendous ; and a native enemy could for the first time boast that he had met the British in a pitched battle without discomfiture. Their triumph, however, was not of long duration. Before the end of the next month, though their army had been strongly reinforced in the mean time, lord Gough again attacked them at Goojerat, and gained a complete victory. The Sikhs were reduced to submission on our terms, and by a formal decree the governor-general secured future peace by annexing all their territory to the dominions of the company.

During these eventful years circumstances arose also in the countries beyond India, which increased our power and reputation in those distant regions. On the renewal of the charter of the East India Company in 1833, the trade with the east which had previously been monopolised by it as its exclusive privilege, was thrown open to the whole body of our merchants ; and, among the arrangements which so great a change in the management of our eastern settlements necessitated, one provided for the establishment of a royal commissioner of superintendence at Canton as the chief seat of our commerce with China. But the Chinese authorities with their inveterate jealousy of foreigners were most unwilling to admit lord Napier, who was appointed the first commissioner, into the city. Nor was it without some display of his resolution to carry out his orders by force, if necessary, that he was able to bring them to acquiesce in his presence, and in the measures which he judged requisite to carry out the designs of his government. However his firmness, combined as it was with diplomatic activity and steady good temper, at last prevailed ; and though he unfortunately died almost immediately afterwards, the impression which he had made was so deep that for more than four years they adhered with entire good faith to the agreement which they had concluded with him. But at the beginning of 1839 disputes arose between their authorities and our commissioner on the subject of the trade in opium ; and after some months had passed in angry discussion, a new viceroy of Canton, named Lin, resolved to carry the matter with a high hand : he seized on a vast amount of property belonging to the merchants, and threw the merchants themselves, and captain Elliott, the superintendent of our affairs at Canton, into prison. A naval and military force was at once sent from Calcutta to chastise these insults. The fleet blockaded Canton : and the soldiers under sir Hugh Gough, landed on the continent, and defeated the Chinese armies, stormed their strongest forts, and seized on the islands of Chusan and Hong Kong ; but the occupation of them was not at first very advantageous to us, since the unhealthiness of the air brought on a terrible mortality among our troops. As the Chinese still held out, Gough, who was now joined by sir Henry Pottinger, and by admiral sir W. Parker, proceeded northwards to Amoy, and stormed that important place in spite of the great and unexpected strength of its fortifications. In all these operations our loss was trivial. The Chinese, though not timid, had no skill in fighting ; so that when we took Chinhoe, they lost 2000 men, while our loss was only nineteen killed and wounded. At last, when they found us preparing to attack Nankin, the ancient capital of their empire, they submitted ; and in August, 1842, a treaty of peace was signed, by which they agreed to pay a

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sum exceeding £4,000,000, to cede to us the island of Hong Kong, and to open their principal harbours to our merchants, with full security for their future commercial operations; and though they have not always observed these stipulations with good faith, nor abstained at all times from acts of injustice and violence towards our countrymen, still the mercantile advantages which we thus obtained have proved of great value, and it added considerably to our reputation among the Eastern nations, that we had so easily reduced to such complete submission the most arrogant barbarians in the world.

The advantages which were opened to us about the same time in the great and important island of Borneo are invested with a more romantic interest, owing their origin to the enterprise, genius, and enlightened humanity of one noble-minded individual. In the year 1838, Mr Brooke, now known as sir James Brooke, having received for his great deeds the riband of the Bath, which has never been more honourably earned, having in the course of his travels visited the island of Borneo, and found a great portion of the inhabitants of that and the neighbouring islands wholly abandoned to a life of piracy, slave-trading, and murder, conceived the idea of devoting himself to the civilisation of these savage tribes. With this generous and holy view, at the beginning of 1839, he took up his residence at Sarawak, on the western coast of the island, where his fearless frankness, joined to a singular degree of tact and judgment, soon procured him such an ascendancy over the sultan, that he made over to him the entire sovereignty of the district of Sarawak, which he had long been unable to keep in order, with the title of rajah. Being thus invested with positive authority, Brooke proceeded vigorously in his work of reform, in which he was efficiently assisted by captain Keppel, and one or two other commanders of British ships stationed in those waters. He fought one or two severe actions with large flotillas of pirates, and inflicted a terrible but necessary punishment on the hordes which had long been the terror of the Eastern sea. He himself was severely wounded; but personal danger neither daunted his resolution nor abated his energy; and, when order was in some degree established, he began to apply himself to the arts of peace with admirable judgment, abstaining from doing too much, or from encumbering an infant commerce with complicated regulations, feeling, to use his own words, that "when the British flag was once hoisted, trade and prosperity would follow in its footsteps." All classes, from the bishop of Calcutta to the master of the smallest vessel which visited those regions, soon perceived the blessings which were being diffused by his healthy influence over that portion of the globe. The British merchants thankfully acknowledged the benefit of the ex-

tensive field of commerce which he had opened to their enterprise. The government set the seal of their approbation on his efforts by investing him with the office of governor of Labuan, a small island to the north of Sarawak, and of British commissioner to the native states of Borneo; and, in 1848, after a short visit to England, he returned to his new home with increased powers, to prosecute his career of useful beneficence, deservedly proud of having won the esteem and admiration of his countrymen as well as the barbarians whom he governed, and of the enemies whom he curbed, not so much by his wisdom and courage, great has they have been, as by the still rarer and more truly glorious qualities of disinterested integrity, justice, and humanity.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

VICTORIA (CONTINUED).



WHILE these events were taking place abroad, at home we were enjoying steadily increased prosperity. At the beginning of 1840 the queen married her first cousin, prince Albert of Saxe-Gotha, and the union proved eminently happy, and beneficial to the nation from the example of every domestic virtue afforded to their people by the royal pair, till it was terminated by the death of the Prince in the winter of 1861. The general prosperity was further advanced by the financial measures of sir Robert Peel, who, in 1841, again became prime minister, and who availed himself of his return to power to remodel the whole commercial system of the country in a manner that did the highest credit to his abilities as a financier. He administered the affairs of the country with great success for some years, during which, by a happy mixture of firmness and moderation, he terminated a dispute with the United States about the boundary between the possessions of the two nations, which at one time threatened to involve them in war, till, in the year 1846, his cabinet was broken up in consequence of a change of policy to which he had felt himself driven in the previous autumn.

The question of the propriety of maintaining a tax on the importation of corn had of late years been agitated with great earnestness by both parties, and he himself, in the revision of our taxation to which I have alluded above, had materially modified the duty to which it was liable, though still preserving the principle of the

A D 1845

sliding scale, which has been mentioned in the account of the last years of the reign of George III. The Whigs generally maintained that the steadiness of price which both parties desired would be better secured by a fixed duty, and for some time the dispute between the two parties was limited to the question which principle of taxation was preferable. But within the last few years a new theory had been broached by an association called the Anti-Corn-Law League, established at Manchester, that any tax at all upon the necessary food of the people was indefensible, and arguments in its support were urged in the house of commons with great vehemence by a numerous party, headed by two large manufacturers, Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright. Peel had constantly upheld the other side of the question, arguing that the tax only gave the agriculturists a protection to which they were fairly entitled, in consequence of the especial burdens to which land was subject in these kingdoms, and he was supported by a great majority in both houses of parliament, who were commonly distinguished by the name of Protectionists with reference to their opinions on this subject. For several successive sessions the matter was debated with great zeal; but the advocates of the repeal of the corn-laws had not made any great progress, when, in the autumn of 1845, the question suddenly assumed a new aspect in consequence of the blight which almost destroyed the potato both in England and Ireland, while at the same time the wheat crop was unusually deficient. Under these circumstances Peel considered it impossible to maintain a tax upon corn during the ensuing winter, and at the same time he thought it would be so difficult to recur to it after having once abrogated it that he preferred repealing the corn-laws to suspending them. His proposal was very unwillingly received by his colleagues, though at last they all consented to adopt his views, with the exception of lord Stanley, the secretary of state for the colonies, who resigned his office, in which he was succeeded by Mr. Gladstone; and, at the beginning of the next year, Peel brought into the house of commons a bill for the entire repeal of all duty on the importation of corn beyond the sum of one shilling, the collection of which would enable the government to ascertain the quantity imported. His proposal was resisted with great determination by the Protectionists, and his own conduct in bringing it forward, after having pledged himself so long and so strongly to the opposite view, was assailed with the fiercest invective. However, a majority felt the impossibility of maintaining the corn-laws now that they were abandoned by him who had long been looked upon as their ablest champion, and their repeal was carried. But, though he was thus far successful, the measure led to the overthrow of the government. The Protectionists, who had pre-

viously formed the bulk of his supporters, leagued with the Whigs to get rid of a minister by whom they considered that they and the cause dearest to their hearts had been betrayed; and in July the combined parties defeated him in the house of commons, and a Whig ministry, under lord John Russell, succeeded to power.

No change of cabinets, however, had much effect in allaying the spirit of discontent that still troubled Ireland. Severe laws of coercion were passed to no purpose, and enactments conceived in a milder spirit, were more ineffectual still, while the great mass of the priesthood co-operated with O'Connell in his lucrative trade of agitation; for, though the exaction of the Catholic rent, as it had been called, had been terminated by the grant of Roman Catholic emancipation, he had still every year levied on his countrymen a great sum, of which he had the entire disposal, in which extortion he was aided by the priests, who employed all the power which their form of religion gives them over their parishioners to compel even the poorest of the peasantry to contribute. In May, 1847, he died, and, though none of his followers had the ability requisite to fill his place, a gentleman of ancient family and excellent private character, Mr. Smith O'Brien, the member for Limerick, aspired to be his successor. His want of discretion, which at once precipitated his followers into open rebellion, and his want of any kind of ability, which rendered that rebellion ridiculous, has perhaps contributed as much as any other cause to the comparative tranquillity which of late years has reigned in that island.

The year 1847 was one of most grievous distress in Ireland: the almost entire loss of the potato, and the scantiness of other crops had produced a famine; though the British parliament voted enormous sums to supply the Irish with food, numbers died of actual starvation, while want and hardship implanted disease scarcely less fatal in many of the survivors. In spite of the lavish liberality with which the wealth of England was poured forth to alleviate these miseries, O'Brien and some editors of newspapers persuaded a large mass of the people that the true remedy for them was to be found in a separation from England, and in July he prepared to compel this separation by force of arms, collected 2000 or 3000 men, armed in different degrees of completeness, and summoned the police in different towns which he passed through to surrender their arms and join him. They were steady in their loyalty, and for some time O'Brien forbore to use violence; but at last he ordered his men to fire upon one house in which a body of forty or fifty police were awaiting reinforcements. The police returned the fire; one or two of the insurgents were killed, the rest fled, and O'Brien among the first. He was soon taken, tried, and convicted of high treason; but the affair had been so contemp-

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tible that the government could afford to be merciful, and were contented with inflicting on him the punishment of transportation, which was remitted in 1856, when the restoration of peace was celebrated by a general amnesty to all political offenders.

An attempt to excite disturbance in England had been equally abortive. A new French revolution had taken place in February, which had ended in the expulsion of Louis Philippe and the establishment of a republic; and this event had greatly encouraged the Chartists, who announced their intention to assemble on Kennington Common, and from thence to proceed in a body to the houses of parliament, on the 10th of April, to present a petition which they asserted to have received 5,000,000 signatures. It was evident that the threatened assembly might lead to very dangerous consequences. The government behaved with great resolution, issuing a proclamation prohibiting it as illegal, and swearing in a great number of special constables, among whom was prince Louis Napoleon, at that time a fugitive in England, and since, by the almost unanimous suffrage of his countrymen, emperor of the French; while the duke of Wellington, who still held the post of commander-in-chief, brought several regiments to London, and, though he forbore to provoke an attack by a display of his force, posted it in different parts of the metropolis, so judiciously as to secure the instant suppression of any violence that might be attempted: the mob that assembled at Kennington was far smaller than had been expected; its leaders were daunted by the steadiness of the police. After a few noisy speeches the assembly dispersed quietly, and the whole affair served only to display the strength of the government, and the real source of that strength, the loyal attachment to its ancient institutions cherished by every class of the people.

The organization of the military on this occasion was the last service rendered by the veteran duke to the country which he had so long served. In 1850 his friend, sir Robert Peel, died by a fall from his horse, leaving behind him the reputation, if not of a firm, bold, far-sighted, and consistent statesman, at least of an honest, disinterested minister, whose object in all his actions was the good of his country, and who, by his disregard of all opposition, and even of bitter personal hostility and obloquy, in the pursuit of that object, carried many measures of great benefit, the success of which could perhaps have been secured by no inferior influence. And in September, 1852, the duke himself died, almost suddenly; awakening (though at his age such an event could not have been expected to be long delayed) such an universal regret as was the best testimony to the great and rare assemblage of virtues which adorned his character.

On his military exploits it is superfluous to dwell. Surrounded by difficulties greater than ever had embarrassed Marlborough, his fearless spirit of enterprise enabled him to perform exploits, exceeding in importance, as well as in number, the achievements of that great commander, while his unvarying prudence preserved him from the disasters that more than once threatened with total ruin the brilliant genius of the great Frederic. The general with whom he may perhaps most naturally be compared is his own great antagonist, Napoleon; and even from that comparison he need not shrink. Brilliant as were some of the blows which the French emperor dealt with such electric violence on his foes, yet none of his victories were more complete than those of Salamanca and Vittoria; consummate as was the mastery over every branch of the military science which he exhibited in so many of his campaigns, from the time which first displayed his genius to the Austrians in Italy to that when it almost baffled the overpowering hosts which pressed him on all sides in the plains of Champagne: yet we may fairly doubt whether the skill then put forth surpassed or even equalled that which planned for the British troops the retreat behind the lines of Torres Vedras, and which drove the French, in spite of their superiority in numbers, step by step, from the coast of the Atlantic to the walls of Toulouse; while it may certainly be urged that the bravest and most skilful of the generals who succumbed to Napoleon were far inferior to the long list of French marshals, who, victorious over all other enemies, successively met with unvarying defeat when confronted by the genius of Wellington, at once audacious and cautious, rapid and deliberate; to which Napoleon himself, in his only conflict with it, proved equally inferior.

As a statesman, the foresight with which he predicted the course of events in Spain, and the causes which led to his final triumph, was scarcely less admirable than the military genius by which he ensured the fulfilment of his predictions, while, as a minister at home, he displayed on all occasions the most consummate administrative ability; and if, greatly influenced no doubt by the effects of the revolutionary spirit which he had witnessed in Spain and France, he was too apt to confound reform with revolution, and to oppose measures which have since been found beneficial, yet, even by the confession of his opponents, no one ever conducted a parliamentary opposition with such candour and fairness; no one ever so cordially put forth his utmost exertions to secure for the measures which he had opposed, when they were once carried, the success which till that moment he had refused to anticipate for them.

The cause of this conduct is to be found in that principle which

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at all times actuated him, and which is more really entitled to our admiration than even his vast military and political ability; his unswerving, disinterested sense of duty: no personal considerations of his own power, influence, or popularity, or even of his own character for foresight and consistency, being ever weighed by him for a single moment against what he believed to be the true interest of the country. And his country, knowing that his sole object was at all times to serve her, has repaid his devotion to her interests with a reverence for the virtues and an attachment to his memory, which may prove the best incentive to future generations, by imitating his virtues, to seek to rival his glory.

Too soon was a field opened to his admirers, on which to show how far they had profited by his military lessons. After one or two changes in the cabinet, a coalition ministry had been formed under lord Aberdeen, who was looked upon as the chief of what was now called Peel's party, with several leading Whigs, lord Granville, lord Palmerston, and lord John Russell, in important offices. In France the republic had been terminated by the erection of an empire, with prince Louis Napoleon at its head; and the emperor of Russia, thinking from the various changes that neither France nor England were in a very settled state, and especially that they were very little likely to combine in any system of joint operations, considered it a favourable time for prosecuting the views which he had long cherished against the independence of Turkey. He sounded sir George Seymour, our ambassador at St. Petersburg, on the views of the British government as to the dismemberment of the Turkish empire; comparing it to a sick man, whose inheritance must shortly be divided among his nearest friends. The British ministry did not consider Turkey in such a precarious state, and at all events was not inclined to give such a proof of its regard for its old ally, as to begin to plunder her before she was dead. But Nicholas was determined not to lose the opportunity which he fancied so favourable; and, having picked a quarrel with the Porte on the refusal of some of his demands respecting the Greek Church in the Holy Land, and the adherents of that Church residing in the Turkish dominions, he poured a body of troops into the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia while his fleet issued from Sebastopol, a fortress of amazing strength at the southern point of the Crimea, and wholly destroyed the Turkish fleet, which was lying at Sinope, on the opposite coast of the Black Sea, with circumstances of the most excessive and needless cruelty.

These events made a great impression on the governments of Western Europe; and a conference between the ministers of England, France, Austria, and Prussia was held at Vienna in July; who, however, found their efforts to terminate the dispute by peace-

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ful means ineffectual. Turkey claimed the assistance of England, to which she was entitled by treaty; France cordially agreed with the British cabinet in its view of what was due, not only to the interests of Europe, but to justice. The British fleet was in the neighbourhood before, though not in the Black Sea. A combined British and French fleet was at once sent to the Dardanelles; and, as the negotiations, which were continued during the winter, led to no satisfactory result, in March, 1854, the two nations declared war against Russia. A powerful British fleet was sent to the Baltic, under sir C. Napier, and a numerous army, both British and French, was conveyed to the Black Sea, and by the beginning of May was encamped at Varna.

Napier's fleet, though of great service in paralyzing the Russian trade, and in detaining on the shores of the Baltic a large force which would otherwise have been employed against our army in the south; was unable to perform any brilliant actions, from the circumstance of the Russians keeping close in their harbours, which they knew to be almost inaccessible, from the shoals with which they were surrounded. He did indeed destroy the strong fortress of Bomarsund on the Aland Islands; but a careful reconnoissance of Cronstadt showed him that that, the principal stronghold of the enemy in the Baltic, was unassailable with the slightest prospect of success, and neither he nor his successor, admiral Dundas, were able to effect any thing in appearance worthy of the gallant armaments entrusted to their command. In the Black Sea, admiral sir Edmund Lyons was more successful; for though his bombardment of Sebastopol produced no great effect, and though he was unable to force an entrance into the harbour, which the Russians had effectually blocked up by sinking the whole of their fleet across its mouth, an expedition which he detached into the sea of Azof took Kerch, and all the towns of the south-western coast, and by the vast quantities of magazines of every kind which it destroyed, contributed very much to the ultimate defeat of the enemy before Sebastopol itself. But, as the most important and most interesting operations were those of the army, we shall confine ourselves to a brief narrative of the campaign in the Crimea, with the name of which the whole war is identified in the minds of all who recollect the agonizing anxiety with which for eighteen long months they looked for news from that previously little-known country.

Varna proved a most unhealthy quarter for our army; and towards the end of the summer, it was determined to transfer both English and French troops to the Crimea, the southern promontory of which was occupied by the city of Sebastopol, on the fortifications of which all the resources of military science had been exhausted in the most lavish manner; and which was held by a large garrison

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under the command of prince Menschikoff, than whom there was no officer in the Russian service more deservedly trusted by his imperial master. The commander of the English force, of about 25,000 infantry and 1000 cavalry, was lord Raglan, who, as lord Fitzroy Somerset, had been one of Wellington's aids-de-camp on the glorious field of Waterloo. The French army, of nearly the same number, was under the orders of marshal St. Arnaud, who had already won high distinction in the wars of Algeria. On the 14th of September, the two armies landed in the Crimea, at a place called Old Fort, about twenty miles to the north of Sebastopol; and as soon as the stores were disembarked and the men had rested, they began their march towards that city. Neither army, however, was in good health; the French marshal was so ill that, after a few days, he was forced to resign his command, and he died before he could reach Constantinople; and among our own troops, cholera and dysentery were far from being eradicated, and carried off many men, even before the battle of the Alma.

It was soon known that the allies would not be allowed to place themselves in front of Sebastopol without opposition, and after marching one day, on the morning of the 20th of September they found the whole Russian army, of about 60,000 men, drawn up on the southern side of the small river Alma, in a position so strong, that prince Menschikoff, its general, wrote to his imperial master that he could detain the invaders three weeks in front of it. The Russian line of battle occupied the summit of a gentle slope, at the foot of which was the Alma, a narrow, but in some places deep stream, with steep banks. The left of their position, which was opposite to the French, was protected by such rugged and precipitous heights, that they conceived it needless to fortify it with artillery; but the open plain, across which our men were to advance, was commanded by formidable batteries erected on every available spot. Neither precipices nor batteries, however, could arrest the progress of the allied armies, neither of which had ever met an equal except the other. The French, with their wonted gallantry, climbed the heights in their front, dragged up some of their heavy guns, and, in spite of the stubborn resistance of the Russians, who were every where superior in numbers to their assailants, completely turned their left; while the British soldiers forded the Alma, and advanced up the open slope in the face of a most tremendous fire, never wavering till they took the batteries which were pouring in upon them, forcing the enemy back step by step from each successive position, till at the end of three hours they were completely driven from the field with the loss of some of their guns, and prince Menschikoff's carriage and despatches.

The victorious armies at once advanced, though there was already

such a deficiency in the necessary supplies, that our own troops both men and officers, were for several days unable to obtain the smallest quantity of meat, and the horses were without forage, and even without water; but these difficulties were disregarded, and by a skilfully planned march the army passed round Sebastopol, and established itself at Balaklava, on the southern side of the city, where there was a small harbour, which would enable the soldiers at all times to receive supplies from the fleets, which, after transporting them from Varna, accompanied their march, and greatly assisted them in many of their subsequent operations. At the end of three weeks, which were occupied in completing our trenches, and erecting batteries, the bombardment of the town commenced. The fleets stood in and engaged the forts at the mouth of the main harbour; and from that day forth for eleven long months did the assailants exhaust every possible form of attack, and the defenders display the most untiring ingenuity and the most heroic courage in baffling and in withstanding the fearful means of destruction employed against them. Besides the numerous garrison within the walls, a powerful army of 30,000 men, under general Liprandi, was in the neighbourhood, which, on the 25th of October, eight days after the commencement of the bombardment, made a formidable attack on our position at Balaklava; but, though in consequence of an unfortunate mistake on the part of its commanders, our light cavalry brigade was almost cut to pieces, they gained no other advantage. A second attack the next day met with even worse fortune, being repulsed with very heavy loss, and the enemy postponed any further offensive operations till some large reinforcements should arrive, which were known to be on their way. On the 4th of November they arrived; and the very next day the whole army, now numbering 60,000 men, advanced to fight the bloody battle, which from a small ruin overlooking the field has received the name of Inkermann.

Menshikoff had not yet learnt, even from the day of the Alma, the folly of premature boasting. On the eve of the coming battle he wrote to the Emperor to announce that in a few days the invaders of his dominions would have perished by the sword, or have been driven into the sea, and to request him to send his sons to Sebastopol "to receive untouched the priceless treasure which his master had committed to his keeping." It was against the British flank that his attack was directed. Soon after midnight the tolling of church-bells, and the sounds of chanting and psalmody were heard in Sebastopol, and after a solemn religious service, the troops advanced against the heights on which our camp stood. It was a dark, misty morning, and, owing to the want of caution of the officer in command of our pickets, the first intimation that our men

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received of the approach of the enemy was derived from a heavy volley poured into the ranks, which, for the most part, were still buried in sleep; but no troops recover from a surprise so readily as the British. The weight of the attack fell on our second division, under the command of general Pennefather, and on the guards, led by the duke of Cambridge. The French general, Canrobert, who had succeeded St. Arnaud in the command, sent a division to their assistance; and this small portion of the two armies, scarcely amounting to 14,000 men, resisted upwards of four times their number for eight hours, and at last drove them headlong from the field, with a loss in killed and wounded exceeding the number of the whole allied force by which they had been encountered.

Our loss also had been severe. More than a fourth part of the force engaged had been killed or wounded; but still they had fallen, covered with glorious wounds, by the manner of their deaths affording the best consolation to their sorrowing kinsmen. But want and disease are foes more terrible than sword and bullet; to endure such hardships with patience and fortitude is a harder task than to face the excitement of a battle; and our gallant soldiers were now exposed to them in a more painful degree than any British army on record. No grudging spirit had been shown at home; not only was every thing that could be required cheerfully voted by the parliament, but private subscriptions, amounting to above a million and a half of money, were raised in order to provide pensions for the wounded, and for the relations of the slain, and to furnish additional comforts to the living. But, unfortunately, the long period of peace which the country had enjoyed had greatly disorganised all our military departments, and there was a want of foresight at first, and of arrangement afterwards, attributable perhaps rather to circumstances than to individuals, but which was bitterly felt by the soldiers from the first day they landed in the Crimea. Unavoidable misfortunes augmented their distress. At first, though the rigours of the Crimean winter were well known, no steps had been taken to provide the men with sufficient shelter or with warm clothing; and when those necessities were sent out, the greater part of them were lost in a storm, in which the vessel which conveyed them was wrecked. The food, too, was for a long time bad in quality and deficient in quantity; and even when the requisite supplies arrived in the harbour of Balaklava, the roads were so bad and the means of transit so scanty, though the camp was only seven miles off, that they were almost as much out of the reach of the troops as if they had been in England. Want of food, want of clothing, and want of shelter produced their usual sad results; every form of disease,

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ague, fever, dysentery, and cholera, fell with giant strength upon our men, thinning their ranks with a havoc far exceeding the ravages of war; the hospitals were full, and the sick for whom room could not be found in them, were more numerous than those who were admitted. The medical staff too was very deficient in number, and many died for want of the necessary attention.

From these scenes of mismanagement and misery one person, though such a motive was far from her thoughts, contrived to reap a glory undying as human fame can be. A young lady, Miss Florence Nightingale, of a high degree of personal attraction and accomplishments, of good birth, and of good fortune, hearing of the distress of our gallant soldiers, and especially of the want of nurses in the hospitals, and having already taken a humane interest in the details of such establishments, and acquired an acquaintance with the system pursued in them, both in England and on the Continent, made the government an offer to go to the seat of war herself with a body of nurses, and there to devote herself to the care of the sick and wounded. Her proposal was thankfully accepted. Above thirty more ladies, attracted by her example, offered her their assistance. With a staff of nurses, hired by the government to aid them, they sailed without delay, and in the beginning of the winter landed at Scutari, where the hospitals of the army were established.

For twelve long months did these admirable women, accustomed to every luxury at home, submit to the most painful drudgery, and expose themselves to scenes more trying to the nerves and courage than the severest toil, to the most loathsome smells, to the most agonizing sights, for the sake of helping those, who in the cause of their country had become disabled from helping themselves. How, walking like ministering angels amid that scene of anguish and woe, they tended the wounded, spoke words of holy comfort to the dying, cheered the convalescent, devoting even the time set apart for their own rest and relaxation to reading the sufferers' letters received from their homes, or writing for them to their friends, is told by the grateful tongues of thousands of soldiers, but can never be adequately described by the most eloquent historian.

Meanwhile, the tale of the sufferings of the army caused the greatest discontent and indignation at home, which was especially directed towards the ministry, who proved to be divided among themselves. After some bitter discussions had taken place in parliament, lord Aberdeen resigned, and as lord Derby, to whom the queen offered the government, doubted his ability to form a cabinet as strong as the emergency required, the task, with the general approbation of the country, was entrusted to lord Palmerston, who, at the beginning of 1855, became prime minister; lord

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Panmure being the secretary at war, and lord Clarendon having the seals of the foreign department.

All the spring and summer the siege of Sebastopol was maintained with vigour. In June lord Raglan died of cholera, sincerely regretted by both armies, and was succeeded by general Simpson; while, in the French army, general Canrobert resigned his command, and was succeeded by general Pelissier. To historians of the campaign it belongs to relate the details of the different operations by which the siege was conducted to its ultimate success, the assaults of the Redan, the capture of the Mamelon, and to do justice to the steady resolution and gallant sallies of the Russians. In August they once more ventured on a pitched battle, attacking the position held by the French, and by the Sardinians, of whom a small but gallant body, under general de la Marmora, had lately joined the allies. But they were defeated with heavy loss, and made no further attempt to avert the fate of the beleaguered city. At last, on the 8th September, the final assault took place; the English attacked the Redan, and effected an entry into that formidable outwork, though they were unable to retain their position; but the French, at the same time, made themselves masters of another redoubt, called the Malakhoff; and in the night the Russians evacuated the whole side of the city to the north of the harbour, of which we at once took possession.

In effect the war was over with the fall of Sebastopol. No other operation of any importance was undertaken during the autumn, except a successful expedition made by the fleet against Kinburn, at the mouth of the Dnieper; and, in the spring, the long negotiations which took place at Paris were terminated by the signing of a treaty of peace, in which Russia receded from all her demands on Turkey which had led to the war, consented to the permanent dismantling of the fortifications of Sebastopol, and to a condition prohibiting any future maintenance of a fleet of war in the Black Sea, renounced her claims on the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, and agreed to the establishment of a new frontier for her province of Bessarabia, ceding a small portion of her previous territory in that quarter to Moldavia, so that, for the first time since the reign of Peter the Great, a war waged by Russia terminated in the diminution instead of in the augmentation of her dominions.

This alone would have been a great result; but other circumstances also characterized this war, which we may reasonably hope will have a durable effect on the future peace of the world. Many of the most terrible wars that in former times have desolated Europe owed their origin to the enmity, the natural enmity, as unthinking people often called it, between France and England:

but in this war, for almost the first time, the English and French armies fought as allies; and this new friendship, cemented by their blood, may be looked upon as the surest pledge of future tranquillity. The two nations are now closely united by achievements performed and honours earned in common, by reciprocal aid and mutual sympathy in the battle-field; pressing onwards side by side, and struggling shoulder to shoulder, they have learnt the value of each other's co-operation while witnessing, with admiration unalloyed by jealousy, the admirable qualities which distinguished each. No nation but the one has ever been able to contend with the other; and, as long as they are united, we may safely predict that no other nation will be so forgetful of the warning afforded by the fate of Russia as to venture to encounter their combined hostility; while this consideration alone should be sufficient to make the maintenance of an alliance, which bears and promises such happy fruits, the most sincere and permanent object of the statesmen of both countries.*

CHAPTER LXXIV.

VICTORIA (CONTINUED).

A.D.
1857.



It was fortunate, indeed, that we were once more at peace in Europe; for the next year brought with it a peril to our dominion in Asia of which but few had ever anticipated the possibility, which, even though we were fortunately able to encounter it with our undivided strength, was fraught with unparalleled misery and grievous disaster; and with which, had the energies of our statesmen and warriors been at the same time distracted by European war, we might have found it beyond even the strength of Britain to cope. Since the termination of the war in the Punjab central India had been tranquil and increasing in prosperity, through the judicious measures which the new governor-general, the marquis of Dalhousie, had taken to expand the resources and extend the commerce of the country. Nor had the general improvement been interrupted by the chastisement which, in 1852, he was compelled to inflict on Burmah. In the quarter of a century which had elapsed since the former war, the Burmese had had time to forget their humiliation and their disasters; and from time to time com-

* This was written in 1856.

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plaints reached Calcutta that the governor of Rangoon was in the habit of seizing our merchant vessels, often exacting a heavy ransom for the ships, and occasionally even venturing to inflict torture on some of the crew. The very anxiety of the governor-general to preserve general peace enforced upon him the necessity for a vigorous policy; for though he had no suspicion of the eagerness which so many of the native princes afterwards showed to throw off our yoke, he knew well that our authority in India rested mainly on a belief of the danger of resisting us, and that the slightest appearance of a tame submission to insult on our part would at once arm thousands of enemies against us. He instantly demanded reparation to those who had been ill-treated, and redress for the wounded honour of the British crown; but he could scarcely obtain a reply to his remonstrances, and saw plainly enough that a repetition of the lesson of 1826 was indispensable. He took his measures with energy and promptitude. In the first week of April, 1852, he declared war, and despatched a squadron of eighteen vessels, small enough to ascend the rivers, under commodore Lambert, and 6000 men under general Godwin, a veteran who had learnt the nature of the country in the former war. Their success was as decisive and as rapid as that which had attended their predecessors on that occasion. Nearly all the vessels were steamers, and as such better able to force their way up the narrowing channel of the different rivers than those which had been employed before. Conveyed and supported by them, the general attacked Martaban, Rangoon, Bassein, Promé, and Pegu in rapid succession. They had been greatly strengthened of late. Rangoon had even been removed to a site more distant from the river, and one which was therefore expected to prove safer, as being inaccessible to our ships. But it was still within reach of their mortars; and so, while the soldiers stormed its walls on one side the sailors bombarded it on the other. Before the end of the year the five cities all were taken, and the king of Ava could only purchase the withdrawal of our troops by ceding the important maritime province of Pegu, which lord Dalhousie formally annexed to our Indian dominion.

Three years afterwards that dominion received a more important addition without striking a blow; though it is probable that the transaction had no slight share in awakening the desperate hostility to our rule which presently broke out over so vast a portion of the country. At the beginning of 1856 lord Dalhousie, who was in very bad health, returned to England, and was succeeded in the government by lord Canning, the son of that brilliant statesman who, thirty-four years before, had been on the point of undertaking the same office. Lord Canning fully shared his predecessor's zeal

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for the internal improvement of the country ; and hoped to be able to carry out his plans in the same spirit in which they had been conceived ; but he, too, soon found that, though neither of them suspected it, he had succeeded to a heritage of unprecedented difficulty. Lord Dalhousie's last act had been the annexation of the kingdom of Oude. It was no sudden or unforeseen act ; for the king was notoriously and even confessedly guilty, not only of the grossest misgovernment of his own subjects, but of the most flagrant violations of his treaties with us ; and had, consequently, been warned by more than one preceding governor-general that, if he continued his misconduct, we should be compelled, by every consideration for our own honour and for the interest of his own people, to deprive him of his throne. As the proclamation which deprived him of his authority, secured him at the same time ample means for a continuance of the personal luxury for which alone he seemed to value it, lord Dalhousie had believed that he would acquiesce contentedly in his deposition. But, if he himself viewed it with comparative composure, it was regarded with very different feelings by some of his neighbours, who saw in his degradation a forerunner of their own, and in whom this feeling of personal apprehension stimulated to instant action the jealous animosity with which it was almost natural for them to regard us as invading conquerors,* and which had already been prompting plans for our overthrow. There were not wanting considerations which seemed to prove our extirpation feasible. Not only were the British settlers in India a mere handful of men when compared with the almost countless millions of natives, but our authority was mainly supported by those natives. They formed infinitely the greater part of our Indian army ; they were as well armed, as highly disciplined as the European regiments, and if they could be induced to unite against us, the contest would be very different in character from that in which Surajah Dowlah had been crushed by Clive, or even from those in which Tippoo or Scindia had yielded to Wellesley. The stimulus of religion was added ; prophecies were circulated, that a single century had been fixed by the gods as the period of the British dominion, and the very next year would be removed by just that distance from the battle of Plassey.

* The statement of the causes to which the mutiny is ascribed in the text seems to be that which is on the whole the most probable. It has been also attributed to religious feelings ; and to a belief that some changes which had been recently introduced into the military regulations of the native army, and into the manufacture of their cartridges, were designed to entrap them into the adoption of the Christian religion. But absurd as such belief was in the case of all, whether Hindoos or Mahometans, the changes were more calculated to affect the Hindoos, while the first and chief movers in the revolt were the Mahometan tribes. Moreover, the greased cartridges had, in fact, been used without complaint for some years by the native troops employed on the Peshawur frontier. It must be admitted, however, that it is impossible to arrive at any certain knowledge of the causes which influenced the chief conspirators. Of the facts there is no question.

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The leaders of the conspiracy took their measures with energy and secrecy. Throughout the winter secret emissaries transmitted mysterious signals among the tribes, which were regarded as the easiest to be excited to revolt, and thus the adherence of a sufficient number of the native troops, and of the unarmed population, was secured. By the beginning of May all was ready. Some indications of what was in agitation had been afforded by the impatience of one or two regiments, which had hurried them into acts of premature mutiny, which had been vigorously repressed and chastised; several of the culprits were executed, and two regiments were disbanded. But no suspicion of any concerted or general outbreak had been awakened, when, on the 10th of May, 1857, two out of three native regiments, which were stationed at Meerut, rose in mutiny, fired on their officers, broke open the gaol, and, having liberated above 1000 convicts, murdered every European whom they could discover, and then fled to Delhi, from which Meerut is not quite 40 miles distant on the north-east. A small body of British troops, both infantry and cavalry, was encamped within three miles of Meerut, who, the moment that the intelligence of what had taken place reached them, marched against the mutineers; but, though they made no small havoc among their ranks, they could not arrest their progress or prevent the greater part of them from reaching Delhi, where their arrival was the signal for a similar outbreak on a larger scale. Delhi was the ancient capital of Bengal, and still the residence of the sultan or king, in whose name the company had so long been contented to exercise its real sovereignty, and for the restoration of whose authority the mutineers now professed to have taken arms; the garrison at the time consisted of none but native regiments, commanded, as a matter of course, by British officers; and the number of civilians, servants of the company, and merchants, was very considerable. The moment that the mutineers from Meerut reached the city, the soldiers joined them, murdered their officers, and, dragging the unarmed Europeans into the palace, slaughtered them in cold blood in the presence, and by the command of the king and his sons, and then began to prepare for a resistance to the endeavours which they could not doubt would speedily be made to chastise their guilt. In a few days the revolt spread over the whole district known as the Doonab, over Rohilcund, Bundelcund, and Oude; the native troops of every station mutinying, and the only variety consisting in the degrees of atrocity with which their treason was accompanied. In too many instances, not only the officers, but their families also, their wives, children, and European servants were massacred with every circumstance of indignity and torture. At Futteghur, the sepoy

not only threw off their allegiance, but proclaimed a new sovereign, the Nawab, placing him on a throne, and firing a salute in his honour. They then set fire to all the public buildings; and, with a degree of military preparation which had not yet been exhibited elsewhere, undermined the fort, and slaughtered every one who fell into their hands, pursuing with relentless cruelty those who tried to escape in boats, and massacring them also with the most hideous barbarity.

At Bareilly the mutineers added the mockery of justice to their cruelties, subjecting the principal members of the civil service in that station to a formal trial, and hanging them by judicial sentence. But all the atrocities committed at other places fell far short of those which were perpetrated at Cawnpore, a town on the Ganges, about twenty-five miles south-west of Lucknow. It was a military station of some importance, occupied by four native regiments and about 250 British troops, under sir Hugh Wheeler. He was a cautious and skilful officer, and from the first moment that he learnt what was happening in other places he took what precautions were within his power, entrenching a camp around the barrack, and removing all the Europeans who were not soldiers into the church and one or two other defensible buildings. But he had hardly completed his preparations when the whole body of native troops deserted, and placed themselves under the command of the rajah of Bittoor, a small town in the neighbourhood. This Rajah, who was generally known by the title of the Nana, or Nana Sahib, conceived himself to have a personal injury to avenge; for he was the adopted son of the old Peishwah, Bajee Rao, and on his death had demanded a continuance of the enormous pension which had been granted to that chieftain at the time of his deposition. But his claim had been rejected, and his discontent at the company's decision had made him a zealous promoter of the conspiracy. He at once marched on Cawnpore, which he expected to find an easy prey; for besides his troops, amounting to nearly 3000 men, he had some batteries of heavy guns, with several mortars, while, including the British officers of the native regiments which had deserted, the garrison scarcely amounted to 300 men, who were encumbered with double that number of non-combatants, of whom above 200 were women and children. But the British general was as intrepid as he was skilful, and, though his numbers were grievously thinned by the ceaseless fire of the rebels, which told with terrible effect on so small a space, he held out for seventeen days, till the Nana began to fear that relief might arrive, and called in treachery to obtain for him what he began to doubt whether his arms would achieve. On the eighteenth day, the 24th of June, he opened a negotiation

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with sir Hugh, offering, if the place were surrendered, to allow the garrison and their companions a safe passage to Allahabad, a town sixty miles higher up the river, where the authorities at Calcutta were energetically and rapidly collecting a force which it was hoped might be sufficient, if not at once to extinguish, at least to arrest the further progress of the mutiny, and which was placed under the command of general Havelock. Sir Hugh closed with his proposal, and on the 27th, as soon as boats could be provided, he evacuated the fort he had held so gallantly, and embarked his party, which the events of the last three weeks had reduced to half their numbers. He had so nearly exhausted his means of defence that he had in truth had no alternative, and he was severely wounded himself; but he was now to learn that the treachery of the rebels was more formidable than even their ferocity. The treaty of surrender, and of consequent safety to the garrison, had been ratified by the Nana with an oath of recognised solemnity; but while the boats were getting ready he had been posting some heavy guns and companies of musketeers to command different points of their passage, which, as soon as they came in sight, opened fire upon them. Numbers were killed by the shot; some of the boats were sunk, and the chief part of their crews were drowned. The survivors were seized and carried back to Cawnpore, where the men were at once shot or cut to pieces, while the women and children were driven into a large building which had hitherto been used as an assembly room for balls and festive entertainments, but which was now destined to be the scene of the foulest tragedy which had taken place in India since the Surajah had suffocated his victims in the black hole. Here for three weeks they lay in misery such as has been inflicted on few of their sex: to hunger, squalor, and the want of the means of ordinary decency was added the spectacle of the weaker members of the company dying before their eyes, and the hourly apprehension of death or a worse fate for themselves. At last it came. By the 13th of July Havelock found himself at the head of 12,000 men, a force strong enough, as he hoped, to rescue the prisoners. And though he was more than once encountered by the rebels, with vastly superior numbers, he routed all their bands with great slaughter, and pressing on with a celerity of movement marvellous in such a climate, by the morning of the 16th he crossed the river and came in sight of the town.

His approach hastened or decided the fate of those whom he had hoped to save. The Nana gave instant orders for the massacre of every one of them; and his commands were executed with eagerness by the mutinous soldiers who had long been impatient for them. It was in vain that the unhappy women, gathering

courage, and even a momentary hope, from what they heard outside their prison walls, that succour was at hand, tore up their clothes that they might twist them into ropes, with which to fasten the doors. The murderers burst through the feeble barrier. Not one was left alive; those were happiest who were slain by one blow; many were hacked limb from limb; of the children many were lifted up and had their brains dashed out against the floor or the walls; the bodies were thrown into a huge well or tank; the Nana, when nothing more was left to destroy, fled; and when at last Havelock entered Cawnpore he took possession of nothing but the desolate scene of the most hideous butchery that had ever met the eyes of a British soldier. All that he could do was to cover in the well to conceal the mutilated corpses in a decent grave; to avenge their murder, and to prevent the repetition of such horrors elsewhere. For there was no small danger that a similar fate might await a more numerous body at Lucknow, the capital of Oude. That great city was defended by only a single British regiment, the 32nd, with a small detachment of the 84th, and three native regiments, the 13th, 48th, and 71st native infantry, which still remained faithful to their colours, under the command of sir Henry Lawrence; (for general sir James Outram, the chief commissioner of Oude, was absent), and it was already blockaded by an army of the mutineers who, knowing all its resources and all its weakness, entertained no doubt of a speedy victory. But the garrison which held it was inspired with a higher motive than the lust of hatred and bloodshed which excited them. Lucknow, too, contained nearly 500 helpless women and children, the families of the merchants who had been attracted to settle in it by the interests of their commerce; and the lives of all these, the honour of their country, very probably the ultimate preservation of the British dominion in Bengal depended on the prowess of this handful of men exposed to the daily attacks of fifty times their number. For the next eight months, till the final suppression of the mutiny, the chief interest was concentrated on the city. For at Delhi we were soon victorious. It seemed at first like an evil omen that general Anson, the commander-in-chief, died of cholera while marching, on the first intelligence of what had occurred, from Simla against Delhi. His successor, general Reed, fell sick a few days afterwards, and the command devolved on sir Henry Barnard, who, in the second week of June, arrived in front of Delhi, and invested it with an army which reinforcements gradually raised to about 9000 men, of whom at least half were native troops. For some provinces and tribes had resisted the contagion of rebellion, and adhered with unshaken loyalty to our government, under which, as they well knew, they enjoyed a fatherly protection and

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security which none of their native princes had ever afforded them. Conspicuous among these were the Ghoorkas; and, though they were the very last tribe which had been brought under our dominion, the Sikhs. And both these nations furnished valuable contingents to Barnard's force. Scindia, too, the grandson of Wellington's old antagonist, resisted alike the persuasion and the threats of the rebels. His soldiers deserted him; and at last formally deposed him; installing a nephew of the Nana on his throne. But he adhered unflinchingly to our cause. The siege presented some unusual features, for, so confident were the mutineers of their superiority, that they made repeated sallies. On one occasion, the anniversary of Plassey, pouring down on our lines with almost their entire force; but in every instance they were defeated with great slaughter. And when, at the end of July, Barnard, too, was compelled by illness to resign the command to general Wilson, the change had no effect on the fortunes of the two armies. At the beginning of September Wilson received a train of heavy siege guns, with which he soon breached the walls and battered down one of the gates. And on the 20th of September, Delhi was ours, and the king and his family were prisoners in our hands. Most of his sons were executed. But he himself was spared, out of pity for his age and imbecility, and after a trial by court-martial was banished to Rangoon.

Throughout the mutiny it was remarkable that, in spite of the lessons in discipline which the sepoys had received from us, no superiority in numbers could enable them to encounter us on equal terms. But the difference was in no case more remarkably seen than in the sieges of Delhi and Lucknow. Delhi we captured with a force far less numerous than the garrison; Lucknow fifty times our numbers could not wrest from us; and the history of modern warfare has no more brilliant page than that which tells of the resistance by which, for five long months, Inglis and his handful of heroes kept at bay thousands of enemies, amply provided with every means of attack, and dauntless even to ferocity in their use of them. The very second day of the siege brought them an advantage which seemed but too likely to be decisive: on the second of July a shell mortally wounded sir Henry Lawrence, than whom India had neither a better soldier, nor one more gifted with the art of inspiring confidence into all under his orders. Happily colonel Inglis, of the 32nd, on whom the command now devolved, was a kindred spirit. To the inevitable distresses of a siege other hardships were soon added; small-pox, cholera, and low fever attacked the garrison, and, harder perhaps to bear than either, unexpected disappointment; for before the end of July Havelock contrived to send Inglis word that he should be able

to relieve him within the week, and yet nearly two months elapsed before the promised relief came; for Havelock, after a most resolute effort to force his way to the city, had found his numbers wholly unequal to the enterprise, and had been compelled to fall back and wait for reinforcements. They were brought to him by sir James Outram himself, who however, with rare self-denial, waived his military rank, and accompanied him in his civil capacity as Commissioner of Oude, that the credit of saving Lucknow might be Havelock's.

It was not till the 29th of September that the relieving force came in sight of the city, and after a severe action succeeded in joining their beleaguered comrades; but all that was procured by this success was the means of making a more effectual and assured resistance. The united armies, if indeed either could be called by so imposing a name, were far too weak to be able to withdraw in safety, encumbered as they would have been by the women and children, through the host of the besiegers; and further reinforcements were therefore needed, which all felt assured might soon be looked for. For the moment that the intelligence of the mutiny reached England the government despatched to India the whole body of troops available for its suppression by such rapid instalments, that within three months eighty ships, bearing 30,000 tried soldiers, were on their way, and with them sir Colin Campbell, the general who of all those employed against Sebastopol had achieved the highest reputation, as commander-in-chief. He arrived in the Ganges in the latter part of October, and as the relief of the Lucknow garrison was evidently the most pressing necessity of the campaign, that was the enterprise to which he first applied himself. The force at his disposal was not entirely military. On the first news of the mutiny, sir Michael Seymour, the admiral commanding in China, had sent not only all the troops but all the ships that could be spared to Calcutta; and the naval officers, burning with an irrepressible desire to co-operate in the deliverance of their imperilled countrymen and in the maintenance of their country's authority, in some respects even outdid all their former achievements. Captain Key, of the *Sanspareil*, a splendid two-decker with 70 guns, carried her up the Hooghly, where no such vessel had ever been,* and anchored her under the walls of Calcutta, where the achievement created such confidence in all classes, that lord Canning entrusted the protection of the city to her, and despatched the ordinary garrison to join the army in the field; and captain Peel, of the *Shannon*, who had already distinguished himself in the naval brigade at Sebastopol, sought and obtained

* Admiral Watson's ships, the *Kent* and the *Tiger*, which had forced their way up the same stream a century before, carried 16 fewer guns each, and were of much smaller tonnage.

A.D. 1856.

permission to leave his frigate in the river, and to form his crew into a fresh brigade for shore service. He was joined by a small body of men from one or two other ships, and with 600 blue-jackets and a powerful battery of ships' guns, contributed greatly to the success of the general's operations. A strong division under sir Hope Grant had been for some days awaiting sir Colin's arrival, a few miles from Lucknow. Sir Colin joined it on the 12th of November, and, after devoting two or three days to the necessary preparations, on the 16th approached the city, with nearly 18,000 men, and commenced operations by the assault of the Secunder Bagh,* a strong outpost held by several regiments of the mutineers. In a few hours the walls were breached, and the fort stormed with a prodigious slaughter of the rebels; other strongholds were successively carried in a similar manner; and the next day the last body of the mutineers was routed and the garrison was relieved. Even after this success, so strong was the rebel army, that sir Colin did not think it either politic or safe to evacuate the district, but contented himself with strongly reinforcing the garrison, and withdrawing it, with the ladies and civilians under its protection, to a more defensible position known as the Alumbagh, two or three miles from the city; while he proceeded against other bodies of the mutineers, some of which were ravaging different districts in great strength; and one of which had gained a considerable advantage over general Windham. Havelock, unhappily, was not spared to receive from a grateful country the reward of his valiant service; four days afterwards he died of dysentery. But Outram, though on sir Colin's departure he was again blockaded, had no difficulty in baffling all the attacks of the rebels. On one occasion he even quitted his defences, and, taking the field, inflicted a severe defeat on their main body, though far more numerous than his own army; and at last, on the 1st of March, 1858, having routed every division of the rebels who ventured to encounter him, Campbell returned to Lucknow, to put a finishing stroke to the rebellion by the capture of the city. His army was such as had never been seen in India under the British flag; for besides his own troops, nearly 25,000 in number, he was reinforced by 9000 men from Nepaul, which the sultan had sent, under his principal general, to mark his resolution to adhere to the alliance which he had recently formed with us; while Outram also quitted the Alumbagh and joined him with his division. On the 6th our guns opened on the city, and, though it was of great extent, strongly built, and well fortified in every part, by the 21st every outwork was carried, a great portion of the garrison and of the citizens had already fled, and the city was ours. A few weak divisions of

* Bagh means garden or plantation.

rebels still kept up a desultory warfare for a few months, but they were all defeated; and before the end of the year sir Colin was able to announce to the governor-general that "the campaign was at an end; 150,000 armed men had been subdued, with a very moderate loss to her majesty's troops; and that there was no longer even the vestige of rebellion." He added to his description of the completeness of the triumph, that it had been accompanied by "the most merciful forbearance towards the misguided enemy;" and there was nothing in our victory which either more redounded to our national honour, or more showed our consciousness of our strength, than the extreme moderation with which we treated those engaged in the rebellion. A very few of the most guilty chiefs, of those whose hands were most deeply stained with the blood of our innocent countrymen, were executed; a few others, less guilty, but far from innocent, were punished by deprivation of their rank and confiscation of their property, but the main body were freely pardoned. One enduring result of the mutiny was the transference of the imperial authority over India from the East India Company to the crown. That such authority should be exercised by a mercantile body, however well organised, was an evident anomaly; but it had been acquiesced in so long, that it might in all probability still have remained undisturbed for some time longer, had not an alteration been imperatively called for by the necessity which the recent crisis had shown to exist for less divided, more immediate, and therefore stronger rule. That such a necessity had been proved to exist was hardly denied by the directors of the company themselves; and, accordingly, it was with very general approval that, in the summer of 1858, lord Stanley, as colonial secretary, introduced a bill for vesting the future government of India in the crown; for the old board of control was substituted a council of fifteen members, seven of whom were to be elected by the directors of the company from their own body, and eight to be appointed by the crown, and who were to act as a body of advisers to a new officer, who was created at the same time, the secretary of state for India, who for the future was to be the responsible minister. So obvious was the policy of such a measure, that the bill was discussed with an unusual absence of party spirit, and before the end of the session it received the royal assent; and, though it retained all its commercial importance, the sway of the company as a governing body was terminated, though it could not be denied the praise of having, in the course of a century, founded and created the grandest colonial empire that had ever existed, and of having administered it, on the whole, greatly to the advantage of even the natives whom it had subdued.

A.D. 1857.

It has been mentioned that troops to aid in the suppression of the mutiny had been sent from China; for we had just been compelled to renew hostilities with that country. Fourteen years had effaced from the memory of the Chinese authorities the humiliation which had been inflicted on them in 1842, and at last they began to provoke us by the same ill treatment of our merchants that had provoked our vengeance on that occasion. At last they even ventured to seize a trading-vessel, called the Arrow, on the plea that two of her crew had offended against their laws, and the magistrates at Canton paid no attention to the demands for redress preferred by the British resident. Our minister, sir John Bowring, reported both the insult and the obstinacy of the Chinese to the admiral on the station, sir Michael Seymour; and that officer, in whom political decision was admirably united with great professional skill, looking on their behaviour as a mere experiment to see how far they might venture to carry their insolence, at once renewed the demand for redress in his own name, and supported it by sending a strong squadron up the river to Canton. As reparation was still refused, he captured all the forts, whether on the mainland or on the islands in the river, which form the chief defences of the city, destroying some of them and placing a garrison in others, so as to make himself absolutely master of the river and the whole trade of the city, and though, during the winter, the Chinese made more than one vigorous effort to dislodge him, they only brought severe defeat on themselves. At first sir Michael was unable to do more, since the size of his vessels prevented him from pursuing the Chinese fleets, which consisted of large boats called junks, which, though able to carry crews of 100 men and several heavy guns, drew very little water, and generally lay up small side streams or creeks. But the moment that he found himself compelled to have recourse to hostile measures, he applied to the admiralty at home for some gunboats fit for service in such shallow waters; and when they arrived, in the spring of 1857, he shifted his flag to his tender, and in person led them, with the boats of the fleet, against the different squadrons of junks. Some of them proved stronger than he had anticipated; the chief squadron, lying up Fatshan creek, trebled his own force, for it consisted of 80 large junks, manned by 6000 men, and armed with above 800 guns, many of them being 42 pounders of European manufacture. Their positions, too, were chosen with considerable skill; but he defeated them so utterly that only three vessels escaped; the rest were all captured or destroyed, with only trifling loss to the conquerors. For a few months further operations were suspended by the necessity which the admiral felt of sending all the force which he could spare to Bengal. But in the autumn the earl of Elgin joined him, as our

A.D. 1858

minister plenipotentiary, to negotiate with the Chinese, and he was accompanied by a small body of troops under general Van Straubenzee, and also by a French ambassador, who was also supported by a squadron of his own nation, and who was prepared to co-operate with us in all our demands for redress, and in all measures of force which we might find it necessary to employ; for the French had equal cause with ourselves to complain of the Chinese, who had murdered several of their missionaries, and had treated their demands for redress with the same insolent contempt which they had shown for ours. Yeh, the Imperial Commissioner at Canton, was reckoned, by the Chinese themselves, the most obstinate of his race. Even the knowledge that a force, with which he could have no chance of coping successfully, was at hand, could not induce him to return a favourable answer to the demands now once more made by lord Elgin and baron Gros, his French colleague; so hostilities were at once resumed. Seymour had already warmly advocated the attack of Canton itself, pledging himself for his success. And his assurances were speedily realised. The Chinese fought with dogged resistance, but our guns drove them from their defences: our men, a naval brigade again performing no small part of the work, carried the walls by escalade: Canton was captured, Yeh himself being taken prisoner. And in the spring of 1858, as the Emperor was not yet sufficiently subdued to be willing to treat, the ambassadors and the admiral decided on advancing to Peking itself, which lies on the north of China, about 100 miles up the Peiho. No European vessels had ever been allowed to enter that river; the entrance to which was protected by a number of well posted and strongly armed batteries; and, now, in anticipation of our enterprise, was barred by a strong boom stretched across the stream from bank to bank. But the allies, for the French admiral, Rigault de Genouilly, was now acting in concert with Seymour, were confident of their power to overcome greater obstacles than these. A British ship, the *Cormorant*, broke the boom, and some of the lighter vessels of both fleets silenced and dismantled the forts. And then at length the Emperor was humbled, and to save Peking itself, consented to sign a treaty, known as the treaty of Tientsin, from the name of a town about 40 miles from Peking, at which it was signed, conceding all our demands; which now included permission for a British ambassador to reside permanently at Peking, and for British subjects to travel over and trade with every part of China.

After visiting Japan and concluding a commercial treaty with the sovereign of that country also, lord Elgin returned home. And our fleet returned to Hong Kong. But the moment that our power was out of sight the Emperor repented of his concessions. And

A D. 1859.

when the next year a brother of lord Elgin's arrived in the Peiho to exchange the necessary ratifications of the late treaty, and to take up his residence at Peking as our ambassador, admiral Hope, who had recently succeeded sir Michael Seymour as commander-in-chief on the station, found the river once more barred against him; the forts on the banks repaired and greatly strengthened: the stream a second time obstructed with a boom, and with countless stakes and piles, while the Chinese absolutely prohibited his approach, and showed themselves determined to prevent it. As a matter of course Hope resolved to force a passage, never doubting that he should find his task as easy as Seymour had proved it. But it was now found that, among other things, we had taught the Chinese how to fight. A great number of the guns in their batteries were masked, so that he had no suspicion of their strength till our vessels, chiefly 4-gun gunboats, were under their fire: several of them were disabled; Hope himself was severely wounded; a body of sailors who landed with the intention of storming the forts found their advance impeded by deep ditches, and mud almost equally deep, and were at last repelled with the loss of some of their most brilliant officers; and finally, for almost the first time in our history, a British squadron sustained a decided discomfiture, and a discomfiture from those whom it looked on as little better than barbarians.

No sufficient force was at hand to retrieve the disaster at once, and, if there had been such, Hope was too completely disabled by his wounds, which were of unusual severity. But the home government saw the necessity of not only effacing the defeat by a complete victory, but of inflicting on the Chinese a heavy chastisement for their treachery. For the passage which our squadron had been thus baffled in attempting to force, it was entitled by the previous treaty to have found open; and it was indispensable that the Chinese should be taught that such treaties could not be broken with impunity, and employed merely as a trap to allure Europeans of better faith to destruction. Accordingly, in the spring of 1860, a strong additional force was sent out to Hope; and a small army was placed under the command of sir Hope Grant, an officer who had recently earned a high reputation under sir Colin Campbell in India. To a demand made for a due observance of the treaty of Tientsin, and for reparation for the treacherous attack on our squadron in the preceding year, the Chinese replied with a positive refusal, accompanied with even a reproof to our minister lord Elgin, who had returned to China, for being so "wanting in decorum" as to ask it. It was clear that their successful repulse of our ships had impressed them with a belief in their invincibility. And nothing was left for us but to undeceive them; and that was

achieved with great completeness and rapidity. An unusually wet season, which flooded the lands towards the sea, prevented our commanders from commencing operations till the 12th of August: and on the 12th of October the British and French flags were hoisted on the walls of Pekin; for baron Gros again accompanied lord Elgin, and a French force, though inferior in numbers to our own, co-operated with sir Hope Grant. Taught by the reverse of 1859, Hope, before entering the Peiho, sent a squadron up another stream called the Pehtang, a few miles to the North, which took the Peiho forts in the rear. They were easily destroyed, and the fleet then steamed up the river to Tientsin, without meeting any opposition. The advance of the army was not indeed unresisted, but the utmost efforts of the Chinese were ineffectual to arrest its advance; and it was characteristic of their habitual perfidy, that even after repeated defeats they still placed trust in treachery; and, having deluded the ambassadors by a proposal to treat, they kidnapped the British consul and another civil officer who had been sent forward to arrange a meeting between the plenipotentiaries, seizing also some of the military escort which had accompanied them. The consul and his companion they afterwards restored, though not till after they had subjected them to an imprisonment of several days, aggravated by great indignity and ill treatment: but even the knowledge that a British army was at hand which would be sure to avenge them, could not save the military officers from being murdered in a most inhuman manner. The vengeance was not long delayed. Our artillery was under the command of an officer, since celebrated for his defeat of other barbarians in Abyssinia, sir Robert Napier; and he was preparing to bombard Pekin when it surrendered. Pekin itself was spared, but close to the city was the Yuen-Ming-Yuen the most splendid of all the Emperor's palaces, and, looking on the murder of our officers as peculiarly the crime of the Emperor himself, this lord Elgin determined to destroy. It was first given up for plunder to the soldiers, many of whom were enriched for life by the value of their booty, and then burnt to the ground. And the Emperor, now thoroughly humbled, agreed to all our original demands, to which was added one for the payment of a large sum as an indemnity for the expenses of the war; and a further sum as recompense to the families of those prisoners who had been so foully murdered. This new treaty has hitherto been faithfully observed; but it will require many years of good faith on the part of the Chinese to efface the recollection of their previous continued perfidy, or to induce Europeans to think it safe for a moment to lay aside the attitude of vigilance and self defence.

CHAPTER LXXV.

VICTORIA (CONTINUED).

IT has been mentioned that while the contest with the mutineers was raging in India, the ministry at home was changed. The circumstances which led to the change originated not in this country but in France, where on the 14th of January, 1858, a desperate attempt was made to assassinate the Emperor Napoleon as he was going to the opera, by hand grenades. The actual perpetrators of the crime were seized on the spot; the chief criminal, a man named Orsini, being indeed too severely wounded by the explosion to escape; but there was a general belief that others who had had no small share in organising the conspiracy were residing in England; in fact that this country, from the facilities afforded by nearness to France, was the chosen abode of a gang of ruffians who were constantly occupied with plots against the French Emperor; and that our laws gave them undue protection. Lord Palmerston and his colleagues did themselves entertain so much suspicion of the complicity of one Frenchman then in London, in the plot, that they caused him to be brought to trial; and the evidence by which the charge was supported, though not sufficiently conclusive to warrant his conviction, was certainly such as to show that the suspicion with which he had been regarded by the authorities in Paris was far from groundless. But the ministry were not contented with this single prosecution, but, stung apparently by some remarks which were made in the French newspapers, and by some of the French ministers in the Legislative chamber, on the protection afforded by our laws to all kinds of conspirators and desperadoes, brought into Parliament a bill to alter the law on the subject in a manner which lord Palmerston himself described as likely to deter those who might wish to make this country a place where they might concoct crimes of so disgraceful a character. Under the existing law, he said, England did harbour assassins, though unintentionally. It was notorious that the French secretary of state had written a despatch in which he had urged our government to make some alterations

in our laws. But lord Palmerston affirmed most positively that the bill was not adopted in deference to that command. His denial, however, obtained but modified credit even among his own supporters. Indeed they were the party most active in opposition to the measure; and it was by them that different amendments were moved with the avowed object of defeating it. The ministers defended themselves with great energy; but they failed to convince the house that their bill had not been adopted at the dictation of the French court, and rather from fear than sympathy. The amendment was carried against them by a decisive majority, and the consequences were their resignation, and the resumption by lord Derby of the office which he had resigned six years before.

Again his administration had but a brief duration. The mutiny in India did not so absorb the attention of parliament, but that some of the extreme liberals proposed different measures of parliamentary reform, which had now for several sessions been discussed in the house of Commons, and had even more than once been recommended to the attention of parliament in the Royal Speech. One measure, the abolition of the property qualification for members of the lower house, was carried with almost general assent; since it was notorious that the existing law was constantly evaded; and no good purpose could be served by retaining in the statute book a law which was wholly inoperative. But in 1858 a proposal to lower the franchise, though not defeated by any division, was suffered to drop; its promoters assenting the more willingly because the chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. D'Israeli, promised that the cabinet would itself prepare a measure on the subject. The next year he redeemed the promise, to the overthrow of the ministry. The discussions on the details of the measure which he contemplated, led to such divisions among his colleagues that two of them resigned their offices before the meeting of parliament. And when, at the end of February, Mr. D'Israeli brought forward his bill as a government measure, it was strenuously attacked, and, except by himself, very weakly defended. Many, even of his own supporters, thought it inconsistent with the character of a conservative government to propose such a bill at all. While the opposition, though agreeing with most of its principles, attacked it in almost every detail. The most weighty objections which were made to it, by lord Palmerston amongst others, were perhaps those which condemned the identity of franchise in the constituencies of both counties and boroughs, which one clause went to establish. Some, especially lord John Russell, announced a vehement resistance to another clause, which deprived freeholders in towns of their votes for the county. Even of those who declared their intention of voting for the second reading of the bill, very many, and those the

A.D. 1859.

speakers of the greatest influence, avowed the hope of altering its whole character in the committee. And the fate of a bill so attacked and so supported, could hardly be doubtful; after a debate of unusual length, the government was defeated by a majority of nearly 40, in an unusually full house. They dissolved parliament. But on the meeting of the new one, a vote of want of confidence in them was moved on the address, and carried by 13, in a house in which 638 members were present, the greatest number that had ever divided in the history of the house of commons.

Lord Palmerston returned to the office of prime minister: but short-lived as it had been, lord Derby's ministry had been signalised by one arrangement of great and permanent importance. At the beginning of 1859, war broke out in Italy, between Austria and Sardinia, into which the French Emperor plunged with eagerness, as the ally of the latter power; while there were many parts of his policy and of his language which seemed to menace other countries also. A feeling of uneasy disquietude was spreading throughout Europe. Many feared that we were again approaching a period of general war; and in this country this apprehension suggested another, that the invention of steam vessels, and the alterations which, since the great Revolutionary war, had been introduced into the navies of all countries, would alter the character of any future war, and that we might not always enjoy that immunity from invasion which hitherto our fleets had secured us. Those who so reasoned, inferred that a larger force than could be supplied by our regular army and militia, was necessary for our defence. And, as in 1796 a vast army of volunteers had answered the call of Pitt, so now lord Derby's government, having reason to believe that the men of their own day were well-disposed to follow the noble example of their grandfathers, issued a circular letter to the lords-lieutenant of the different counties, announcing their willingness to sanction the formation of volunteer corps, for home service only, in terms which were, in fact, an invitation to Englishmen to unite in such a manner. As such an invitation, it was accepted with enthusiasm. By the spring of the next year, 70,000 volunteers were enrolled; before the end of the year the number was more than doubled. And it was no evanescent impulse that collected this vast number in arms for the defence of their native land. Even now when ten years have elapsed without their ever being called on to take the field, the number is scarcely smaller than it was in the first moments of excitement and novelty. An annual meeting of competition among the marksmen of the different regiments, wisely planned and skilfully organised, applies an undying stimulus to the whole body. It is far from improbable that its existence has already had an unseen effect in averting war, from the conviction that it has

forced on all Europe, that while such a force, so trained, exists, no attack can be made on us with a prospect of even temporary success. And dangerous as prophecy commonly is, it does seem in this instance safe to predict that the volunteer army is in no danger of forgetting the patriotism to which it owes its existence, or the efficiency to which it is indebted for its European renown.

Thus remodelled the cabinet proved strong and permanent ; lasting till the death of lord Palmerston himself : and indeed not even being dissolved by that event. It was marked by no important political changes, to which it was soon seen that the prime minister himself was adverse. And the energies of the different ministers were rather turned to administrative reforms, for which there was still room ; and to the re-establishment of a healthy state of finance, which the Russian war and the Indian rebellion had inevitably thrown into some disorder. With a view to this most important object, Mr. Gladstone in the autumn of 1859 wisely had recourse to the example of Pitt, and with the consent of his colleagues negotiated a new commercial treaty with France, by which each country engaged reciprocally to reduce, in some cases even to abolish the duties hitherto paid on the manufactures of the other, and on some articles of raw produce also, such as coal and iron. A treaty of any kind with France was not, at the moment, a very popular measure, in consequence of the indignation which was generally felt throughout the kingdom at the recent annexation of Savoy and Nice by the French Emperor ; a step which was looked on as a proof that he inherited no small portion of the grasping spirit of his uncle. But the great advantage which our commerce and manufacturing industry must derive from the throwing open of the French market was so obvious that it outweighed this consideration, and most of the provisions of the treaty were cordially supported by the leaders of the opposition. On one point the Conservative party differed from the ministers, and their disagreement led to a vote of the house of lords which the Commons regarded as a violation of their privileges. Among the duties which it was proposed to abolish was that on paper ; which was disapproved of on many grounds : partly on account of its productiveness and because its abolition would necessitate an increase of the income-tax : partly on the ground that, as the raw material of which paper was made was necessarily limited, no reduction in the duty could be expected greatly to increase the supply, or greatly to cheapen the cost of the article to the consumer, and these reasons in combination weighed so much with the parliament that finally the house of commons only sanctioned the repeal of the duty by nine votes, and the house of lords rejected it by nearly 90. A large

A.D. 1860

party in the house of commons were extremely indignant at this act of the peers, which they looked upon as an infringement of their own privileges; since the arrangement of the finances and the grant of supplies had for many generations been admitted to be peculiarly the province of that house which contained the representatives of the people. And some members of the more violent section of the liberal party were inclined to hurry the commons into resolutions which could hardly have failed to cause a breach between the two houses. The ministers were more prudent. They first moved for a committee to ascertain and report upon the practice of parliament in regard to bills affecting taxation; and when the committee, after a careful examination of precedents, had made their report, lord Palmerston himself moved a series of resolutions which, as to the past, admitted indeed that there had been many occasions in which the house of lords had exercised the power of rejecting bills relating to taxation; but which at the same time, as to the future, declared that the right of granting aids and supplies to the crown, and the limitation of such grants, did in every particular "belong to the commons alone, as an essential part of their constitution." It could scarcely be affirmed that the resolutions were consistent with strict logic, or indeed with the original history of parliament: not with logic, because, if the house of lords had repeatedly rejected money bills, the right to be the sole granters of such could hardly be an essential part of the constitution of the house of commons; nor with the original history of parliament, because it was certain that at first the commons did not tax the lords, but the latter were taxed by themselves;* nor was it till the close of the reign of Elizabeth that the commons, led in this instance by Bacon, first claimed as exclusively their own even the right of originating money bills. But the resolutions now passed settled the practice for the future; and therefore deserve to be remembered as an era in our parliamentary history. After they had repeatedly rejected it, the lords had a little time before been also brought to acquiesce in the adoption by the commons themselves of another measure which its advocates also represented as one affecting their own privileges rather than the interests of the state at large. For several years a considerable party had sought to obtain such an alteration of the oaths required of members of parliament as might enable Jews to obtain admission to the house of commons. The desired alteration was repeatedly passed by the house of commons: but was invariably rejected by the peers, who shared the views of a

* See Hallam: *Historical View of the English Government*, cap. vi. sec. 2. Hallam's *Constitutional History* cap. xiii. and cap. v. The principle on which the doctrine rested that the Lords, though they could reject a money bill could not alter one, was, that originally the members of the house of commons (like those of the states general in France) acted under precise instructions from their constituents; from which they had no power so to depart as to assent to amendments.

large minority in the other house, that no greater insult could be offered to Christianity than to declare by a formal act, that for the most important of all possible employments, so often involving, so often resting on religious considerations, as the legislation for a mighty nation, it was a matter of indifference whether a man were a Christian or not. At last the advocates of the alteration, recollecting the result that had followed the election of Mr. O'Connell for Clare in 1828, while he, as a Roman Catholic, could not take the oaths then required, procured the election of a wealthy Jew, baron Rothschild, as a representative of the city of London. They even tried to induce the house of commons to dispense with the requisite oaths by its own authority. But that was a step too manifestly unconstitutional for the leaders of the Whig party, the chief promoters of the measure, to sanction; though, finding that a precedent existed for one who had been elected a member serving on a committee before he had taken his seat, they had no objection to appointing him to serve on a committee. The house of lords, however, once more threw out a bill to legalise the alteration. But it was an age of compromise; and in 1858, during lord Derby's second ministry, lord Lucan, a member of the Conservative party, and hitherto a steady opponent of the proposed alteration, suggested an enactment by which either house was to be authorised at any time to pass a special resolution exempting any particular member from the obligation of taking the usual oath: such a measure would still, he argued, preserve, as a general principle, the Christian character of the entire legislature; while it would render it possible for the commons to grant the indulgence which they desired to an individual. The compromise was accepted; and as soon as lord Lucan's act had passed, lord John Russell moved, in the case of any Jew who was returned to the house of commons, to dispense with the words of the oath to which he objected. His motion was carried in a thin house of scarcely more than 100 members: baron Rothschild immediately took his seat, and since that time no objection has been made to other Jews being allowed the same privilege.

The invitation to, and the rapid formation of, the volunteer army, were not the only proofs of the degree in which the feeling of insecurity was pervading all peoples and all governments. In 1860, lord Palmerston brought forward a proposal, in accordance with the recommendation of a Commission which had been appointed in the preceding year, to apply an enormous sum of money, which he stated at eleven millions, and which, it was obvious, would in all probability be largely exceeded, to the fortification of our dock-yards; not being deterred by his desire to keep on good terms with France from pointing out that her aggressive

A.D. 1861.

spirit was proved by the mere number of her army, and which was far greater than she could require for purposes of defence. The proposal did not indeed meet with universal assent. The extreme Radicals, led by Mr. Bright, the member for Birmingham, objected to the expense; declaring that, so far from its being necessary or becoming to increase our military expenditure, it would be easy to save three-fourths of that which was now yearly incurred. Other members, of more practical sagacity, preferred trusting to our fleets, which we had recently begun to strengthen by covering some of our ships with iron plates of great thickness, in imitation of the French; and argued that a squadron of such ships would be in fact a moveable fortification, capable of protecting any dock-yard or arsenal that might be in danger. While others drew an argument against the vote from the volunteers, who had already become so numerous as to render it impossible for any foreign enemy to invade our shores without a certainty of destruction. But the vital importance of rendering our arsenals secure against any sudden descent was so manifest to all dispassionate people, that the opponents of the measure could only muster 39 votes, while the minister could command above six times that number in favour of it; and the works were at once commenced. They are not yet completed; and while they have been proceeding, important alterations have been more than once made both in their design and composition; so that the cost originally anticipated has already been far exceeded. Yet, even if their strength shall never be tested in actual warfare, prudent and economical statesmen will pause before they pronounce the money wasted; they will be even more useful, if, hereafter, they should prevent war, than they could be by repelling it; and the necessity for being at all times in a state of defence as nearly invulnerable as possible, is a part of the price which every great nation must willingly pay for its greatness.

The next few years passed in that tranquil prosperity which leaves but little for the historian to dwell upon. Lord Palmerston, who, in earlier life as foreign secretary, had been accused, not without some reason, of being inclined to a restless policy, calculated at least to excite illwill against us, and to endanger the continuance of peace even if it did not actually lead to its violation, as prime minister showed a wise anxiety to maintain peace at any price short of the national honour; and was more disposed to a dignified disregard of provocation when offered by others, than to any policy calculated to irritate them. Temptations were not wanting to an opposite course. At the beginning of 1861, a fierce war broke out between the Northern and Southern States of the American Union; and when we, while preserving the strictest

neutrality, recognised the rights of the Southern States to be regarded as a belligerent power; the northern states were insulting and even threatening in the language which they applied to our conduct, demanding in a peremptory tone that we were bound to agree with them in declaring the South in rebellion, though many of their own actions, such as the declaration of blockade which they issued, could only be justified or explained on the principle that the Southern States were engaged in legitimate war, and not in rebellion. We, however, steadily adhered to our own policy as that which was warranted alike by the laws of nations and the laws of war, and we had our reward in the rapid growth of internal prosperity which the continuance of peace and the evident resolution to maintain it secured to us.

One occurrence, though not affecting the material prosperity of the nation, nevertheless cast a gloom over it. In December, 1861, the prince Consort died after a short illness; and his death awakened a general feeling of sorrow, and sympathy for the queen not unlike that which had been excited 44 years before by the untimely death of the princess Charlotte. Other events, however, in the Royal Family excited an interest which, though equally general was of a wholly different character, and diffused an universal satisfaction. In the spring of 1868, the prince of Wales, who had come of age in the previous November, married a Danish princess of great attractions; Alexandra, the daughter of prince Christian, the heir to the throne of Denmark; who, before the end of the year succeeded to that inheritance by the death of Ferdinand VII. And his accession kindled a war in Germany, in which, in all probability, both sides at first counted on the support of England; but from any interference in which lord Palmerston wisely and firmly abstained, in spite of a very general feeling in favour of the Danes, which pervaded the whole country. Englishmen in general could not without indignation see Austria and Prussia combine to strip Denmark of her territories without a single pretext of justice; but merely because she was less powerful than her assailants. But lord Palmerston had gradually learnt that a mere desire to prevent other nations from doing wrong was no sufficient reason for plunging this kingdom into war, in a case where its own material interests were in no degree concerned, and while the Continent was agitated with the existing war, and at least equally with the anticipations of future wars which might be expected to arise out of it, and which subsequently did arise out of it, he maintained England at peace in Europe, as well as in America.

It was something of a kindred feeling which led him to discountenance the different measures of parliamentary reform which were

A.D. 1865.

brought forward from time to time, though these proposals came from his own side of the house. But, as he pointed out, all the real improvements for the sake of which organic changes in our parliamentary constitution had formerly been desired had long since been effected, and consequently there was no longer a desire on the part of any considerable body of the people for such change. And his prudent policy both at home and abroad, had its reward in such general approval that the general election, which took place at the end of the session of 1865, returned a greater majority of adherents of the government than any ministry had been able to reckon on for above thirty years.

But when the new parliament met, the minister whom it had been intended to support had passed away. Lord Palmerston was an old man; nearly 60 years had elapsed since his first entrance into official life as a lord of the admiralty, in the duke of Portland's second ministry; and it was not strange that latterly his strength began to fail, though he himself was apparently less conscious than others of its decay. After a short illness, he died on the 18th October. For many years he had been steadily rising in the esteem of all parties; and the impression, which was general, if not universal, that as the chief of the whole administration, he had shone far more than as the head of a department, cannot but be considered very flattering to his abilities. It is quite certain that since the time of Pitt no minister had been equally popular, or more regretted.

At no period in our history have greater advances in the prosperity and comfort of the people been made than in the time which has elapsed since the death of George III. The population has nearly doubled. The resources and riches of the nation have increased so greatly, that, in spite of the repeal of taxes to an enormous amount, the revenue raised far exceeds the amount levied when George IV. came to the throne. At the same time the condition of the poorer classes has been greatly improved. Education has been extended and encouraged throughout the breadth and length of the land; churches in vast numbers have been built; while many of the nobles of the land, by the affectionate and judicious interest which they have displayed in the social and moral welfare of their poorer neighbours, have greatly contributed to fix the national prosperity on its surest foundation, the harmonious union and cordial mutual good will of all classes of the people.

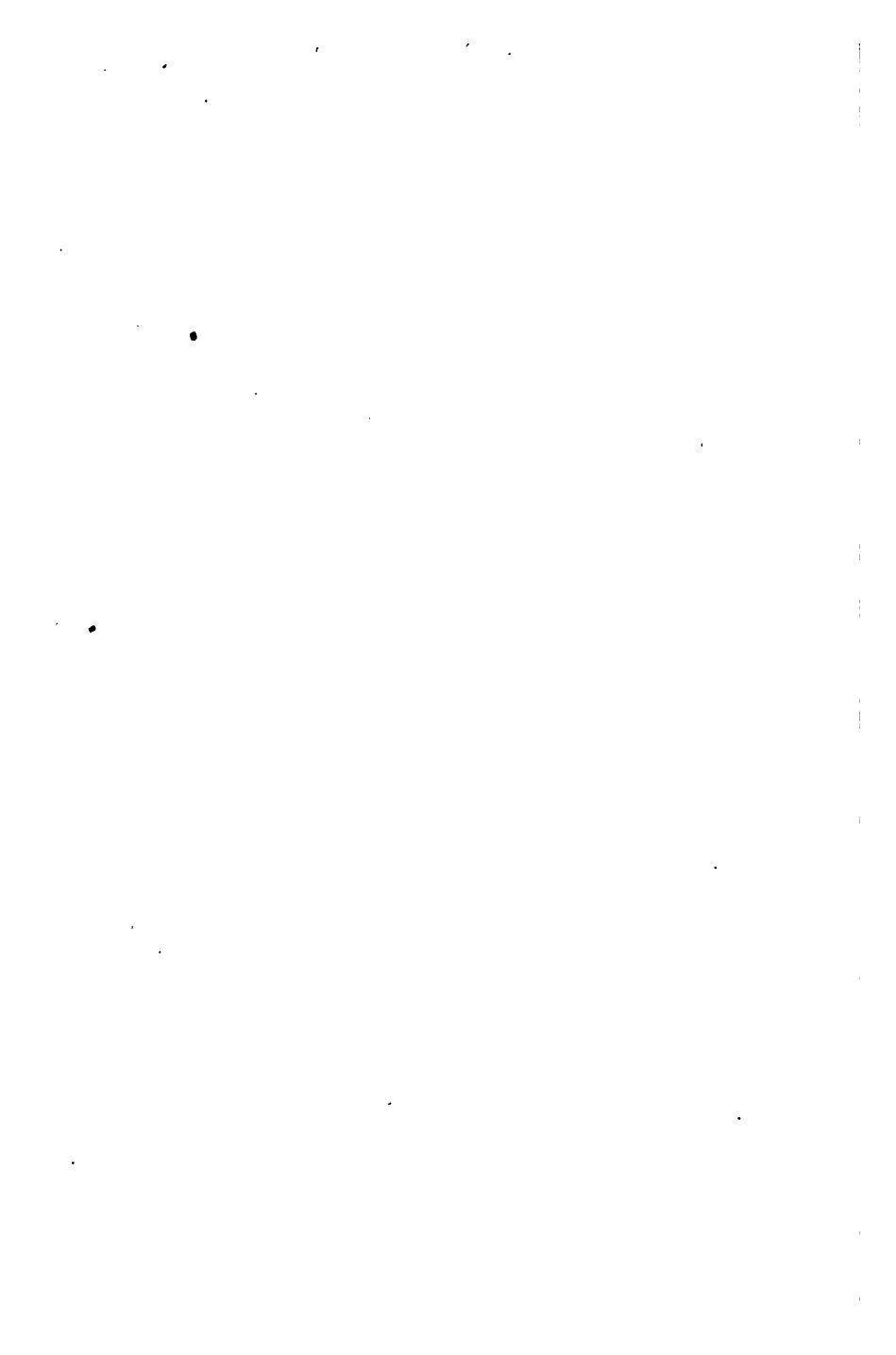
The same progressive prosperity pervades our colonial dominions. Disturbances did at one time threaten our important settlement at the Cape of Good Hope, but they were soon terminated; and in other quarters the increasing resources of our distant settlements are not only a justifiable cause of pride, but an important accession

of strength and wealth to the mother country ; while one of them, Australia, has from its gold-mines poured such floods of wealth into our lap as have well nigh counterbalanced the vast calls which famine, war, and the spread of commercial enterprise have made upon the resources of the whole kingdom.

Though we forbear to speak of individuals who, during this and the two preceding reigns, have devoted themselves to the arts of peace, we still may not close our narrative without recording that those arts have never been more diligently or more usefully cultivated ; and as their most remarkable fruits we may especially notice railroads, and the electric telegraph, which have so wonderfully facilitated communication of every kind, and are gradually bringing the most remote countries into easy and daily intercourse with each other.

I have thus endeavoured to give a brief account of the course of events through which our nation, from being an inconsiderable horde of savages, has arrived at the height of wealth, of power, and of glory which we enjoy. Mistress of vast territories in every quarter of the globe, England may truly boast that no other people has ever ruled such extensive and varied dominions, such numerous and willing subjects. No absolute monarchy has ever equalled her in the mighty energy which she can concentrate on worthy objects, no republic in the completeness and perfection of her freedom. If this sketch, brief, as it is, imperfect, as from its brevity it must inevitably be, shall excite my readers to know more of the constitution under which such grand results have been achieved ; and of the great, and wise, and good men, who from time to time have framed and supported that constitution ; have defended, and enlightened, and governed that nation ; of those noble patriots and heroes, whether commanders, or legislators, or statesmen, who are at once the glory of the past age, and the example of the future ; I shall have fully attained the object which I have ventured to propose to myself.

THE END.



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